The Canon of the Bible

Its Formation History and Fluctuations

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CANON OF THE BIBLE:

ITS FORMATION, HISTORY, AND FLUCTUATIONS.

BY

SAMUEL DAVIDSON, D.D.,

OF HALLE, AND LL.D.

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PREFACE.

THE substance of the present work was written towards the close of the year 1875 for the new edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica." Having been abridged and mutilated, contrary to the author's wishes, before its publication there, he resolved to print it entire. With that view it has undergone repeated revision with enlargement in different parts, and been made as complete as the limits of an essay appeared to allow. As nothing of importance has been knowingly omitted, the writer hopes it will be found a comprehensive summary of all that concerns the formation and history of the Bible canon. The place occupied by it was

vacant. No English book reflecting the processes or results of recent criticism, gives an account of the canon in both Testaments. Articles and essays upon the subject there are; but their standpoint is usually apologetic not scientific, traditional rather than impartial, unreasonably conservative without being critical. The topic is weighty, involving the consideration of great questions, such as the inspiration, authenticity, authority, and age of the Scriptures. The author has tried to handle it fairly, founding his statements on such evidence as seemed convincing, and condensing them into a moderate compass. If the reader wishes to know the evidence, he may find it in the writer's Introductions to the Old and New Testaments, where the separate books of Scripture are discussed, and in the late treatises of other critics. While his expositions are capable of expansion, it is believed that they will not be easily shaken. He commends the work to the

attention of all who have an interest in the progress of theology, and are seeking a foundation for their faith less precarious than books however venerable.

The writer became acquainted with Bloch's "Studien zur Geschichte der althebräischen Literatur," which treats of the Old Testament canon, only after his own was in type. Had he seen it in time, he would probably have referred to some of the opinions which it enunciates.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

As introductory to the following dissertation, I shall explain and define certain terms that frequently occur in it, especially *canon*, *apocryphal*, *ecclesiastical*, and the like. A right apprehension of these will make the observations advanced respecting the canon and its formation plainer. The words have not been taken in the same sense by all, a fact that obscures their sense. They have been employed more or less vaguely by different writers. Varying ideas have been attached to them.

The Greek original of *canon*[1] means originally a straight rod or pole; and metaphorically, what

[1] κανὼν.

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serves to keep a thing upright or straight, a *rule*. In the New Testament it occurs in Gal. vi. 16 and 2 Cor. x. 13, 15, 16, signifying in the former, a measure; in the latter, what is measured, a *district*. But we have now to do with its ecclesiastical use. There are three opinions as to the origin of its application to the writings used by the church. According to Semler, Baur, and others, the word had originally the sense of *list* or *catalogue* of books publicly read in Christian assemblies. Others, as Steiner, suppose that since the Alexandrian grammarians applied it to collections of Old Greek authors as *models* of excellence or *classics*, it meant *classical* (canonical) *writings*. According to a third opinion, the term included from the first the idea of a regulating principle. This is the more probable, because the same idea lies in the New Testament use of the noun, and pervades its applications in the language of the early Fathers down to the time of Constantine, as

Credner has shown.[1] The "canon of the church" in the Clementine homilies;[2] the "ecclesiastical canon,"[3] and "the canon of the truth," in Clement and Irenæus;[4] the "canon" of the faith in Polycrates,[5] the *regula fidei* of Tertullian,[6] and the *libri regulares* of Origen,[7] imply a *normative principle.* But we cannot assent to Credner's view of the Greek word for *canon* being an abbreviation of "Scriptures of canon,"[8] equivalent to *Scripturæ legis* in Diocletian's Act[9]—a view too artificial, and unsanctioned by usage.

The two significations of the word are,—a rule or fundamental principle; and a collec-

[1] *Zur Geschichte des Kanons*, pp. 3-68.

[2] Clement. Hom. *ap. Coteler.*, vol. i. p. 608.

[3] *Stromata*, vi. 15, p. 803, ed. Potter.

[4] *Adv. Hæres.*, i. 95.

[5] *Ap.* Euseb. H. E., v. 24.

[6] *De præscript. Hæreticorum*, chs. 12, 13.

[7] *Comment. in Mat.* iii. p. 916; ed. Delarue.

[8] γραφαὶ κανόνος.

[9] *Monumenta vetera ad Donatistarum historiam pertinentia*, ed. Dupin, p. 168.

tion or list of books that form or contain the rule.

The earliest example of its application to a catalogue of the Old or New Testament books lies in the Latin translation of Origen's homily on Joshua, where the original seems to have been "canon."[1] The word itself is certainly in Amphilochius,[2] as well as in Jerome,[3] and Rufinus.[4] As the Latin translation of Origen has *canonicus* and *canonizatus*, we infer that he used "canonical,"[5] opposed as it is to *apocryphus* or *secretus*. The first occurrence of "canonical" is in the fifty-ninth canon of the Council of Laodicea, where it is contrasted with two other Greek words.[6] "*Canonized* books,"[7] is first used

[1] *κανών.*

[2] At the end of the *Iambi ad Seleucum*, on the books of the New Testament, he adds, *οὗτος ἀψευδέστατος κανὼν ἂν εἴη τῶν θεοπνεύστων γραφῶν.*

[3] *Prologus galeatus* in ii. Reg.

[4] *Expos. in Symb. Apost.*, 37, p. 374, ed. Migne.

[5] *κανονικός.*

[6] *ἰδιωτικός* and *ἀκανόνιστος.*

[7] *Κανονιζόμενα.*

in Athanasius's 39th festal epistle.[1] The kind of rule which the earliest fathers thought the Scriptures to be can only be conjectured; it is certain that they believed the Old Testament books to be a *divine* and *infallible guide.* But the New Testament was not so considered till towards the close of the second century when the conception of a Catholic Church was realized. The collection of writings was not called *Scripture,* or put on a par with the Old Testament as *sacred* and *inspired,* till the time of Theophilus of Antioch (about 180 A.D.) Hence Irenæus applies the epithets *divine* and *perfect* to the Scriptures; and Clement of Alexandria calls them *inspired.*

When distinctions were made among the

[1] After the word is added, *καὶ παραδοθέντα, πιστευθέντα τὲ θεῖα εἶναι. Opp.*, vol. i. p. 962, ed. Benedict. The festal or passover letters of the Alexandrian bishops were pastorals addressed to the church in Egypt, at the approach of the yearly festival of Easter. It was natural that they should have some authority there.

Biblical writings other words[1] were employed, synonymous with "canonised."[2] The canon was thus a catalogue of writings forming a rule of truth, sacred, divine, revealed by God for the instruction of men. The rule was perfect for its purpose.

The word apocryphal[3] is used in various senses, which it is difficult to trace chronologically. Apocryphal books are,—

1st, Such as contain *secret* or *mysterious* things, books of the higher wisdom. It is thus applied to the Apocalypse by Gregory of Nyssa.[4] Akin to this is the second meaning.

2d, Such as were *kept secret* or withdrawn from public use. In this sense the word corresponds to the Hebrew *ganuz*.[5] So Origen

[1] Such as ἐνδιάθηκα, ὡρισμένα.

[2] κανονιζόμενα or κεκανονισμένα,

[3] ἀπόκρυφοι.

[4] *Orat. de Ordin.*, vol. ii. p. 44.

[5] גְּנוּזִים. The Jews applied the word *genuzim* to books withdrawn from public use, whose contents were thought to be out of harmony with the doctrinal or moral views of Judaism when the

peaking of the story of Susannah. The oppo-
ite of this is *read in public*,[1] a word em-
loyed by Eusebius.[2]

3d, It was used of the secret books of the
eretics by Clement[3] and Origen,[4] with the
ccessory idea of *spurious, pseudepigraphical*,[5]
1 opposition to the canonical writings of the
atholic Church. The book of Enoch and
imilar productions were so characterized.[6]

4th, Jerome applied it to the books in the
eptuagint which are absent from the Hebrew
non, *i.e.*, to the books which were *read* in the
rch, the *ecclesiastical* ones[7] occupying a rank
t to the canonical. In doing so he had

[illegible] Fürst's *Der Kanon des alten Testaments*,
[illegible] ger's *Urschrift*, p. 201.
[illegible]
. II. [illegible] 16.
[illegible] 1134, ed. Migne.
[illegible], vol. iii. p. 36.
[illegible]
[illegible] ecclesiastici.

respect to the corresponding Hebrew epithet. This was a misuse of the word *apocryphal*, which had a prejudicial effect on the character of the books in after-times.[1] The word, which he did not employ in an injurious sense, was adopted from him by Protestants after the Reformation, who gave it perhaps a sharper distinction than he intended, so as to imply a contrast somewhat disparaging to writings which were publicly read in many churches and put beside the canonical ones by distinguished fathers. The Lutherans have adhered to Jerome's meaning longer than the Reformed; but the decree of the Council of Trent had some effect on both. The contrast between the canonical and apocryphal writings was carried to its utmost length by the Westminster divines, who asserted that the former are inspired, the latter not.

[1] In his epistle to Laeta he uses the epithet in its customary sense, of books unauthentic, not proceeding from the authors whose names they bear. *Opp.*, vol. i. p. 877, ed. Migne.

CHAPTER II.

THE OLD TESTAMENT CANON FROM ITS BEGINNING TO ITS CLOSE.

THE first important part of the Old Testament put together as a whole was the Pentateuch, or rather, the five books of Moses and Joshua. This was preceded by smaller documents, which one or more redactors embodied in it. The earliest things committed to writing were probably *the ten words* proceeding from Moses himself, afterwards enlarged into the ten commandments which exist at present in two recensions (Exod. xx., Deut. v.) It is true that we have the oldest form of the decalogue from the Jehovist not the Elohist; but that is no valid objection against the antiquity of the nucleus out of which it arose. It is also

probable that several legal and ceremonial enactments belong, if not to Moses himself, at least to his time; as also the Elohistic list of stations in Numbers xxxiii. To the same time belongs the song of Miriam in Exodus xv., probably consisting of a few lines at first, and subsequently enlarged; with a triumphal ode over the fall of Heshbon (Numbers xxi. 27-30). The little poetical piece in Numbers xxi. 17, 18, afterwards misunderstood and so taken literally, is post-Mosaic.

During the unsettled times of Joshua and the Judges there could have been comparatively little writing; though it cannot be denied altogether. The song of Deborah appeared, full of poetic force and fire. The period of the early kings was characterized not only by a remarkable development of the Hebrew people and their consolidation into a national state, but by fresh literary activity. Laws were written out for the guidance of priests and

people; and the political organization of the rapidly growing nation was promoted by poetical productions in which spiritual life expressed its aspirations. Schools of prophets were instituted by Samuel, whose literary efforts tended to purify the worship. David was an accomplished poet, whose psalms are composed in lofty strains; and Solomon may have written a few odes. The building of the temple, and the arrangements connected with its worship, contributed materially to a written legislation.

During this early and flourishing period appeared the book of the Wars of Jehovah,[1] a heroic anthology, celebrating warlike deeds; the book of Jashar,[2] also poetical; and Jehoshaphat, court-annalist to David and Solomon.[3] Above all the Elohists now appeared, the first of whom, in the reign of Saul, was author of annals

[1] Num. xxi. 14. [2] Joshua x. 12, 13; 2 Sam. i. 18.
[3] 2 Sam. viii. 16; 1 Kings iv. 3.

beginning at the earliest time which were distinguished by genealogical and chronological details as well as systematic minuteness, by archaic simplicity, and by legal prescriptions more theoretical than practical. A second or junior Elohist was less methodical and more fragmentary, supplying additional information, furnishing new theocratic details, and setting forth the relation of Israel to heathen nations and to God. The Jehovist in the time of Uzziah, though more mythological than the Elohists, was less formal. His stand-point is prophetic. The third document incorporated with the Elohistic ones formed an important part of the whole, exhibiting a vividness which the first lacked; with descriptions of persons and things from another stand-point. The Jehovist belonged to the northern kingdom; the Elohists were of Judah.

The state of the nation after Rehoboam was unfavourable to literature. When the people

were threatened and attacked by other nations, divided among themselves in worship and all higher interests, rent by conflicting parties, the theocratic principle which was the true bond of union could not assert itself with effect. The people were corrupt; their religious life debased. The example of the kings was usually prejudicial to political healthiness. Contact with foreigners as well as with the older inhabitants of the land, hindered progress. In these circumstances the prophets were the true reformers, the advocates of political liberty, expositors of the principles that give life and stability to a nation. In Judah, Joel wrote prophetic discourses; in Israel, Amos and Hosea. Now, too, a redactor put together the Elohistic and Jehovistic documents, making various changes in them, adding throughout sentences and words that seemed desirable, and suppressing what was unsuited to his taste. Several psalm-writers enriched the national literature after David; and a collection

of proverbs proceeding from Solomon and others was made in Hezekiah's time. The book of Job was written, with the exception of Elihu's later discourses which were not inserted in it till after the return from Babylon; and Deuteronomy, with Joshua, was added to the preceding collection in the reign of Manasseh. The gifted author of Deuteronomy, who was evidently imbued with the prophetic spirit, completed the Pentateuch, *i.e.*, the five books of Moses and Joshua, revising the Elohist-Jehovistic work, and making various additions or alterations. He did the same thing to the historical books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings; which received from him their present form. Immediately before and during the exile there were numerous authors and compilers. New psalms appeared, more or less national in spirit. Ezekiel, Jeremiah and others prophesied; especially an unknown seer who described the present condition of the people, predicting their

coming glories and renovated worship in strains of far-reaching import.[1] This great prophet expected the regeneration of the nation from the pious portion of it, the prophets in particular, not from a kingly Messiah as Isaiah did; for the hopes resting on rulers out of David's house had been disappointed. His aspirations turned to spiritual means. Not merely an enthusiastic seer with comprehensive glance, but also a practical philosopher who set forth the doctrine of the innocent suffering for the guilty; differing therein from Ezekiel's theory of individual reward and punishment in the present world—a theory out of harmony with the circumstances of actual life. The very misfortunes of the nation, and the signs of their return, excited within the nobler spirits hopes of a brighter future, in which the flourishing reign of David should be surpassed by the universal worship of Jehovah. In consequence of their

[1] Isaiah xl.-lxvi.

outward condition, the prophets of the exile were usually writers, like Ezekiel, not public speakers; and their announcement of glad tidings could only be transmitted privately from person to person. This explains in part the oblivion into which their names fell; so that the redactor of Jeremiah l., li.; the authors of chapters xiii.-xiv, 23, xxi. 1-10, xxiv.-xxvii. in Isaiah; and, above all, the Babylonian Isaiah, whom Hitzig improbably identifies with the high-priest Joshua, are unknown. After the return from Babylon the literary spirit manifested itself in the prophets of the restoration —Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi—who wrote to recall their countrymen to a sense of religious duties; though their ideas were borrowed in part from older prophets of more original genius. The book of Esther appeared, to make the observance of the purim feast, which was of Persian origin, more general in Palestine. The large historical work comprising the books of

Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles, was compiled partly out of materials written by Ezra and Nehemiah, partly out of older historical records which formed a portion of the national literature. Several temple-psalms were also composed; a part of the present book of Proverbs; Ecclesiastes and Jonah. The Maccabean age called forth the book of Daniel and various psalms. In addition to new productions there was an inclination to collect former documents. To Zechariah's authentic prophecies were added the earlier ones contained in chapters ix.—xiv.; and the Psalms were gradually brought together, being made up into divisions at different times; the first and second divisions proceeding from one redactor, the third from another, the fourth and fifth from a still later. Various writings besides their own were grouped around the names of earlier prophets, as was the case with Isaiah and Jeremiah.

The literature is more indebted for its best

constituents to the prophetic than to the priestly order, because the prophets were preachers of repentance and righteousness whose great aim was to make Israel a Jehovah-worshipping nation to the exclusion of other gods. Their utterances were essentially ethical and religious; their pictures of the future subjective and ideal. In addition to the prophetic literature proper, they wrote historical works also. How superior this literature is to the priestly appears from a comparison of the Kings and Chronicles. The subjective underlies the one; the objective distinguishes the other. Faith in Jehovah, clothed, it may be in sensible or historical forms, characterises the one; reference of an outward order to a divine source, the other. The sanctity of a people under the government of a righteous God, is the object of the one; the sanctity of institutions, that of the other. Even when the prophets wrote history, *the facts* are subordinate

to *the belief.* Subjective purposes coloured their representation of real events.

The man who first gave public sanction to a portion of the national literature was Ezra, who laid the foundation of a canon. He was the leader in restoring the theocracy after the exile, "a ready scribe in the law of Moses, who had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." As we are told that he brought the book of the law of Moses before the congregation and read it publicly, the idea naturally arises that he was the final redactor of the Pentateuch, separating it from the historical work consisting of Joshua and the subsequent writings, of which it formed the commencement. Such was the first canon given to the Jewish Church after its reconstruction—ready for temple service as well as synagogue use. Henceforward the Mosaic book became an authoritative guide in spiritual, ecclesiastical, and civil matters, as we infer from

various passages in Ezra and Nehemiah and from the chronicler's own statements in the book bearing his name. The doings of Ezra with regard to the Scriptures are deduced not only from what we read of him in the Biblical book that bears his name, but from the fourth book of Esdras,[1] where he is said to have restored the lost Scriptures by writing them anew; and from Talmudic accounts which associate with him the men of the great synagogue. It is true that the latter are legendary and exaggerated, but there is a foundation of fact beneath the fanciful superstructure. As to Ezra's treatment of the Pentateuch, or his specific mode of redaction, we are left for the most part to conjecture. Yet it is safe to affirm that he added;—making new precepts and practices either in place of or beside older ones. Some things he removed as unsuited to the altered

[1] Chap. xiv. 37, &c. See Hilgenfeld's *Messias Judæorum*, p. 107.

circumstances of the people; others he modified. He threw back several later enactments into earlier times. It is difficult to discover all the parts that betray his hand. Some elaborate priestly details show his authorship most clearly. If his hand be not visible in Leviticus chap. xvii.—xxvi.; a writer not far removed from his time is observable, Ezekiel or some other. It is clear that part of the portion (xxv. 19—22; xxvi. 3—45) is much later than the Elohist, and belongs to the exile or post-exile period. But great difficulty attaches to the separation of the sources here used; even after Kayser's acute handling of them. At all events Ezra did not scruple to refer to Moses what was of recent origin. Such was the first canon—that of Ezra the priest and scribe.

After the first collection was made attention was directed to other national documents. Of these the prophetic books were the most con-

spicuous. The order of men from whom they came or whose names they bore, stood out in a favourable light, when looked back at from the restored theocracy, because many of their predictions had been fulfilled. Exhortations and warnings, which had often fallen upon listless ears, had been verified by experience. A desire to gather together the earlier prophetic writings would naturally accompany or follow the zeal displayed in bringing forth the Pentateuch to public view. Hence the historical books of the nation which described the divine guidance of the people as well as the kings under whom the earliest prophets lived (Joshua—Kings), were first adopted.

This second canon originated with Nehemiah, of whom it is said in the second book of Maccabees, that, when founding a library, "he gathered together the acts of the kings and the prophets, and the (Psalms) of David, and the epistles of the kings concerning the holy

gifts."[1] These words, though somewhat ambiguous, and admitting different explanations, present a historical statement which should not be summarily rejected, as it is by Graetz. "The acts of the Kings" contained the two books of Kings (including those now called after Samuel), with Joshua and Judges of which last Ruth was the concluding part; for Joshua was now separate from the Mosaic books, with which it was closely connected at first. This historical portion was the proper continuation of Ezra's canon. The prophets comprehended the four greater and twelve minor ones. Not all the latter, however; for Jonah is of subsequent date. Lamentations were united to Jeremiah as one book. The Psalms of David also belong to this canon; nearly as many as coincide with the first three divisions of the whole book.[2] The Epistles of the kings con-

[1] Chap. ii. 13.

[2] The time and origin of the separate divisions themselves

cerning the holy gifts are not extant. They appear to have been the documents of heathen (Persian for the most part) kings favourable to the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple. Nehemiah's canon was identical to some extent with the second division of the Biblical books. It wanted Jonah, perhaps Malachi, but it had "the epistles of the kings." It was larger than the second Hebrew division of the old Testament, and had probably been preceded by smaller collections of prophetic productions before the captivity. We know that in the captivity itself, and immediately after, older

are uncertain. The first (Ps. i.-xli.) cannot be attributed to the period either of David or Solomon, at least in its present state, because it contains exile psalms, such as the fourteenth. The completion of the second and third books has been assigned to the time of Hezekiah, chiefly on the ground of 2 Chron. xxix. 30, but they have productions later than Hezekiah, such as the fifty-first belonging to the exile period, forty-fourth, forty-eighth, &c.; and the statement of the Chronicle writer is insecure, because his method is often unhistorical in transferring several later arrangements connected with the temple to the time of David, and in inventing others.

prophecies were edited. Men of prophetic ability wrote in the name of distinguished prophets, inserted new pieces in the productions of the latter, or adapted and wrote them over. The first thirty-five chapters of Isaiah, and l., li. Jeremiah, are an evidence of this.

Whether Nehemiah himself collected the books, or whether he merely set the work on foot and saw that it was carried out by the learned men of the time, can only be conjectured. As he was not a priest or a scribe like Ezra, but a statesman, the latter supposition is the more probable. This collection was highly esteemed, though it did not take equal rank with the first. It was not completed before the close of the 4th century B.C., because the book of Jonah was not written till that time. The close of the prophetic canon could not have taken place till some period had elapsed after Malachi,—a period

sufficient for the growth of a general consciousness that the prophetic function had ceased with the youngest of the prophets. Besides the historical books which preceded, there were in it four prophetic ones—Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, the twelve; the last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah, belonging for the most part to an anonymous prophet; while several late pieces were inserted among the prophet's own compositions. Chapters ix.-xiv., themselves made up of two parts (ix.-xi., xii.-xiv.) belonging to different times and authors before the destruction of the Jewish state, were attached to Zechariah's authentic productions (i.-viii.) Ruth belonged to the book of Judges and Lamentations to Jeremiah; but were afterwards detached and put into the third division or canon. Definite allusions to this prophetic collection do not occur till the 2d century B.C. Daniel speaks of a passage in Jeremiah being in "the books" or

"writings;"[1] and Sirach, in the prologue presupposes its completion. Such was the second or Nehemiah-canon, partly gradual in its formation (444-300 B.C.).

The third canon, in which the other books of the old Testament were included, was not made at once. It has been inferred from 2 Maccabees ii. 14, that Judas Maccabaeus collected it, and so completed the entire work; but the basis is precarious. The writer of the passage, or in other words, of the second epistle prefixed to the book (2 Maccab. i. 10—ii. 18) introduces Judas Maccabaeus doing the same thing as Nehemiah. We reject his statement, especially as Judas is made to write to Egypt in the year of the Seleucidae 188, though he died thirty-six years before, 152. The fictitious character of ii. 14 is indicated in the context where the author of the epistle represents the Palestinians as having more books than their brethren in

[1] ix. 2.

Egypt, and offering to send them some; implying a wish on his part to dispose of certain anonymous productions. The Hagiagrapha or third canon was not completed by Judas Maccabaeus; but the college was probably occupied with the books composing it when an interval of peace occurred. Its contents were multifarious, differing widely from one another in age, character, and value—poetical, prophetic, didactic, historical. Such as seemed worthy of preservation, though they had not been included in the second canon, were gathered together during the space of an hundred and fifty years. The oldest part consisted of psalms supposed to belong to David, which were a supplement to those in Nehemiah's collection; perhaps the last two divisions with some exceptions (books fourth and fifth); the first psalm, which contains within itself traces of late authorship, was prefixed as an intro-

duction to the whole collection now put into the third canon. Next to the Psalms were Proverbs, Job, Canticles, which, though non-prophetic and probably excluded on that account from the sacred canon, must have existed before the exile. Enriched with the latest additions, they survived the national disasters, and claimed a place next to the Psalms. They were but a portion of the literature current in and after the 5th century B.C., as may be inferred from the epilogue to Ecclesiastes, and the Wisdom of Sirach. The historical work compiled by the chronicle-writer was separated, Ezra being put first as the most important part and referring also to the church of the 6th and 5th centuries whose history had not been written. The Chronicles themselves were placed last, being considered of less value than the first part, as they contained the summary of a period already described, though with numerous

[illegible] them some; [illegible] to dispose of [illegible] The Hagi- [illegible] was not completed [illegible] the college [illegible] with the books [illegible] of peace. [illegible] were mutinous, [illegible] the mother in age [illegible] prophetic [illegible] Such as seemed worth of preservation, though they had not be[illegible] included in the sacred canon, were gather[illegible] together during the space of an hundred a[illegible] fifty years. The oldest part consisted [illegible] psalms supposed to belong to David [illegible] were a supplement to th[illegible] collection; perhaps [illegible] some exception[illegible] first psalm [illegible] of late [illegible]

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adaptations to post-exile times. The youngest portion consisted of the book of Daniel, not written till the Maccabean period (between 170 and 160 B.C.);[1] and probably of several Psalms (44, 60, 74, 75, 76, 79, 80, 83, 89, 110, 118) which were inserted in different places of the collection so as to make the whole number 150. These late odes savour of the Maccabean time; and are fitly illustrated by the history given in the first book of Maccabees. The

[1] Talmudic tradition, which attributes the redaction of the book to the men of the great synagogue who are said to have acted under the influence of the divine spirit, separates the three apocryphal pieces from the rest; but this arose from the desire of discountenancing the idea that the work consists of romance and legend. Such later tradition took curious ways of justifying the canonicity of Daniel and the redaction of it by the great synagogue, *ex gr.*, the assumption that the second part arose out of a series of unconnected *Megiloth* which were not reduced to chronological order. Still the Midrash maintains that Daniel, or the person writing in his name, was no prophet, like Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, but a man of visions, an *apocalyptist*. It was a general belief, that *visions* had come into the place of *prophecy* when the book appeared. The Greek translation could not have been long after the original, because it is used in the First Book of Maccabees.

list continued open, for no stringent principle guided selection and the character of it was somewhat indefinite. It was called *c'tubim, i.e.* writings;[1] a general epithet suited to the contents.

The earliest attestation of this third canon is that of the prologue to Jesus Sirach, where not only *the law and the prophets* are specified, but "the other books of the fathers," or "the rest of the books."[2] No information is given as

The interval between the Hebrew and the Greek was inconsiderable. The translator not only departed from, but added to, the original, inserting such important pieces as the Prayer of Azarias, the Song of the Three Children, the History of Susanna, and that of Bel and the Dragon. Whether any of these had been written before is uncertain. Most of the traditions they embody were probably reduced to writing by the translator, and presented in his peculiar style. The assertion, that Josephus was unacquainted with these additions is hazardous, since the way in which he speaks of Danial's fame (Antiq. x. 11, 7), and especially of *the books* he wrote (*τὰ βιβλία*), supposes some relation to them. Elsewhere he speaks of *one book* (x. 10, 4; xi. 8, 5), where he may have thought of the canonical part.

[1] כְּתוּבִים, translated by the Greek *ἀγιόγραφα*, hagiographa.

[2] *τὰ ἀλλά πατρία βιβλία*; *τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν βιβλίων.*

to its extent, or the particular books included. They may have been for the most part the same as the present ones. The passage does not show that the third list was closed. The better writings of the fathers, such as tended to learning and wisdom, are not excluded by the definite article. In like manner, neither Philo nor the New Testament gives exact information as to the contents of the division in question. Indeed, several books, Canticles, Esther, Ecclesiastes, are unnoticed in the latter. The argument drawn from Matthew xxiii. 35, that the Chronicles were then the last book of the canon, is inconclusive; as the Zechariah there named was probably different from the Zechariah in 2 Chronicles xxiv. The third canon is not proved to be closed by any of these witnesses, much less by a passage of 2 Maccabees ii. 14, which is sometimes adduced for the purpose.

A more definite testimony respecting the canon is given by Josephus towards the end of

the first century A.D. "For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, ... but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine. And of them five belong to Moses. . . . . But as to the time from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, the prophets who were after Moses wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true our history has been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but has not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there has not been an exact succession of prophets since that time: and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as

either to add anything to them, to take anything from them, or to make any change in them; but it has become natural to all Jews immediately and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and if occasion be, willingly to die for them."[1] This list agrees with our present canon, showing that the Palestinian Jews were tolerably unanimous as to the extent of the collection. The thirteen prophets include Job; the four lyric and moral books are Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Canticles.

The canon, however, was not considered to be closed in the first century before and the next after Christ. There were doubts about some portions. The book of Ezekiel gave offence, because some of its statements seemed to contradict the law. Doubts about others were of a more serious nature; about Ecclesi-

[1] *Contra Apion*, i. 8.

astes, the Canticles, Esther, and the Proverbs. The first was impugned because it had contradictory passages and a heretical tendency; the second, because of its worldly and sensual tone; Esther for its want of religiousness; and Proverbs on account of inconsistencies. This scepticism went far to procure the exclusion of the suspected works from the canon, and their relegation to the class of the *genuzim.*[1] But it did not prevail. Hananiah, son of Hezekiah, son of Garon, about 32 B.C., is said to have reconciled the contradictions and allayed the doubts.[2] But these traces of resistance to the fixity of the canon were not the last. They reappeared about A.D. 65, as we learn from the Talmud,[3] when the controversy turned mainly upon the canonicity of Ecclesiastes, which the

[1] גְּנוּזִים literally *concealed, withdrawn from public use.*

[2] See Fürst's *Der Kanon des alten Testaments, u.s.w.* pp. 147, 148.

[3] *Tract. Sabbat.* ch. i.

school of Shammai, who had the majority, opposed; so that the book was probably excluded.[1] The question emerged again at a later synod at Jabneh or Jamnia, when R. Eleasar ben Asaria was chosen patriarch, and Gamaliel the second deposed. Here it was decided, not unanimously however, but by a majority of Hillelites, that Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs "pollute the hands," *i.e.*, belong properly to the Hagiographa.[2] This was about 90 A.D.[3] Thus the question of the canonicity of certain books was discussed at two synods.

Passages in the Talmud have been adduced to shew that the Shammaite objections to the canonicity of Ecclesiastes "were overruled by the positive declaration from the 72 elders, *being a testimony anterior to the Christian era*, that Coheleth is canonical;" but they do not

[1] Adoyot v. 3. [2] Yadayim v. 3.
[3] See Graetz's *Kohelet*, pp. 162, 163.

support the opinion.[1] "The sages" referred to in the treatise Sabbat and elsewhere is a vague expression, resting apparently on no historic tradition—a mere opinion of comparatively late date. If it refer to the Jerusalem synod A.D. 65, the Shammaites were simply outnumbered there by the Hillelites. The matter was debated hastily, and determined for the time by a majority. But the synod at Jamnia consisted of 72 persons; and a passage in the treatise Yadayim refers to it.[2] The testimony of the 72 elders to whom R. Simeon

[1] The sages wished to pronounce Coheleth apocryphal, because its statements are contradictory. And why have they not declared it apocryphal? Because it begins with words of the law, and ends with words of the law, for it opens with the words "What advantage has man in all his labour wherewith he labours under the sun?" &c., &c.—Sabbat. 30 b.

So also in the Midrash: "The sages wished to pronounce Coheleth apocryphal," &c., &c.—Vayyikra rabba 161 b.

[2] R. Simeon ben Asai said, "I have received it from the mouth of the 72 elders in the day that R. Eleasar ben Asaria was appointed elder, that the Song of Songs and Coheleth pollute the hands."—Yadayim v. 3.

ben Asai here alludes, so far from belonging to an ante-christian era, belongs to a date about 90 A.D. And the fact that the synod at Jamnia took up again a question already debated at Jerusalem A.D. 65, proves that no final settlement of the canon had taken place before. The canon was virtually settled at Jamnia, where was confirmed what R. Akiba said of the Canticles in his usual extravagant way: "No day in the whole history of the world is of so much worth as the one in which the Song of Songs was given to Israel; for all the Scriptures are holy; but the Song of Songs is most holy."[1] As the Hagiographa were not read in public, with the exception of Esther, opinions of the Jewish rabbins might still differ about Canticles and Ecclesiastes, even after the synod of Jamnia.

[1] One who said, "Whoever reads such writings as Sirach and the later books loses all part in everlasting life," can have no weight. He outheroded the Palestinian tradition respecting the Jewish productions of later origin, which merely affirms that they "do not pollute the hands."—(*Toss. Yadayim*, c. 2.)

Jewish literature began to degenerate after the captivity, and it continued to do so. It leant upon the past more and more, having an external and formal character with little of the living soul. The independence of their religious literature disappeared with the national independence of the Jews; and the genius of the people was too exclusive to receive much expansion from the spirit of nations with whom they came in contact. In such circumstances, amid the general consciousness of present misfortune which the hope of a brighter future could not dispel, and regretful retrospects of the past tinged with ideal splendour, the exact time of drawing a line between books that might be included in the third division of the canon must have been arbitrary. In the absence of a normal principle to determine selection, the productions were arbitrarily separated. Not that they were badly adjusted. On the contrary, the canon as a whole was

settled wisely. Yet the critical spirit of learned Jews in the future could not be extinguished by anticipation. The canon was not really settled for all time by a synodical gathering at Jamnia; for Sirach was added to the Hagiographa by some rabbins about the beginning of the 4th century;[1] while Baruch circulated long in Hebrew, and was publicly read on the day of atonement in the third century, according to the Apostolic constitutions.[2] These two books were in high repute for a considerable time, possessing a kind of canonical credit even among the learned Jews of Palestine. Rab, Jochanan, Elasar, Rabba bar Mare, occasionally refer to Sirach in the way in which the *c'tubim* were quoted: the writer of Daniel used Baruch; and the translator of Jeremiah put it into Greek.

With the formation of the canon we may

[1] Zunz's *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge*, pp. 101, 102.
[2] V. 20, p. 124, ed. Ueltzen.

now connect the labours of the great Synagogue, so far as Jewish authorities present credible information regarding it. The Talmudic and other accounts are legendary in part, and also incorrect. Little as is known of its members or doings, some idea may be gathered from scattered notices about it as well as from analogy.

The oldest notice of the great Synagogue is that in the Mishna treatise, Pirke Aboth, where it is said that "Moses received the law from Mount Sinai and delivered it to Joshua, Joshua to the elders, the elders to the prophets, and the prophets delivered it to the men of the great Synagogue. These last spake three words: be cautious in pronouncing judgment; make many disciples; put a hedge about the law."[1] In Baba Bathra their Biblical labours are somewhat minutely described: "Moses wrote his book and the section of Balaam, and

[1] Chapter i.

Job. Joshua wrote his book and eight verses in the law. Samuel wrote his book and Judges and Ruth. David wrote the psalms of the ten elders, &c., &c. Jeremiah wrote his book, Kings and Lamentations. Hezekiah and his colleagues wrote Isaiah, Proverbs, Canticles, and Coheleth. The men of the great Synagogue wrote Ezekiel, the twelve prophets, Daniel, and Ezra. Ezra wrote his book and the genealogy in Chronicles down to himself."[1] Here it is not clear what is meant by "writing"[2] in the latter part of the statement. It means *composition* in the first part, as the context undoubtedly shows; and that is Rashe's explanation of the verb throughout.[3] Perhaps, however, when used of the great Synagogue it means no more than *edit*. That body put into their present form and received into the

[1] Fol. 15, 1.

[2] כְּתַב.

[3] See Herzfeld's *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, vol. ii. p. 94.

national library the works specified. If such be the sense, one word is employed differently in the paragraph, including more or less. Late writers, such as Abarbanel, Abraham ben David, ben Maimun, &c., record that Ezra was president, that it consisted of one hundred and twenty members, including Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, &c.; but the names and number are evidently conjectural and incorrect. Simon the Just is said to have been one of the last members of the college.[1] These late notices deserve little credit.[2]

As Ezra is called "a ready scribe," and his labours in connection with the law were important, he may have organized a body of scribes who should work in harmony, attending,

[1] Simon the Just was, according to some, Simon I., son and successor of the high priest Onias I., B.C. 310-291. Others identify him with Simon II., son of the high priest Onias II., B.C. 221-202, and celebrated in Sirach 50, 1-26. Leading Jewish scholars, such as Zunz, Herzfeld, and Jost, are of the latter opinion; but Josephus is against it.—(*Antiq.* xii. 2, 5.) See Buxtorf's *Tiberias*, chapter x., p. 88, &c.

[2] Herzfeld's *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, vol. i. p. 380, &c. Zwölfter Excursus.

among other concerns, to the preservation and correction of the national literature. It must be admitted, however, that the priests enumerated in Nehemiah x. 1, &c., and the "company of scribes"[1] in 1 Maccabees vii. 12 (comp. ii. 42), afford no basis for such a college. Still, there is nothing improbable in the hypothesis. A succession of scribes and priests, if not conjointly, at least in harmony, continued to labour till the corporation ceased to exist with Simon the Just, who is mentioned as the last belonging to it: *i.e.*, from 444 B.C. till about 200. What they did can only be inferred from the proceedings of Ezra himself, and from the prevailing views as well as wants of the times they lived in. Those who began with Ezra, seeing what he did, would naturally follow his example, and would not scruple, if it seemed best, to revise the text in *substance* as well as form. They did not refrain from

[1] Συναγωγὴ γραμματέων not ἡ συν.

changing what had been written, or inserting fresh matter. Some of their novelties even in the Pentateuch can be discerned. Yet their chief work related to *the form* of the text. They put into a proper shape and state the text of the writings which they studied; perceiving less need for revising the matter. What they did was in good faith, with honest intentions. After the great Synagogue, the Hasmonean college[1] took the oversight in religious, literary, and other matters; a tribunal which we do not, with Zunz, identify with the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem. The senate in question was probably the[2] *gerusia* mentioned in the first book of Maccabees as existing under Jonathan (144 B.C.),[3] so that it may have been instituted some years earlier, and have been

[1] Called in the Talmud and Midrash בית דינו של השמונאי.

[2] γερουσία.

[3] 1 Maccabees xii. 6. Josephus has the same word in referring to the time of Jonathan (*Antiq.* xiii. 5, 8), and also earlier xii. 3. 3.)

the predecessor of the Sanhedrim which Josephus speaks of first in connection with Hyrcanus the second. The way in which these scholars used the book of Esther, applying it as a medium for Halachite prescription, shows a treatment involving no idea of sacredness attaching to the Hagiographa.

At this time appeared the present five-fold partition of the Psalms, preceded as it had been by other divisions, the last of which was very similar to the one that became final. Several inscriptions and historical notices were prefixed. The inscriptions, however, belong to very different times, their historical parts being usually older than the musical; and date from the first collection to the period of the Hasmonean college, when the final redaction of the entire Psalter took place. Those in the first three books existed at the time when the latter were made up; those in the last two were prefixed partly at the time when the collections them-

selves were made, and partly in the Maccabean age. How often they are out of harmony with the poems themselves, needs no remark. They are both traditional and conjectural.

Like their predecessors of the great Synagogue, the Hasmonean rabbis revised the text freely, putting into it explanatory or corrective additions which were not always improvements.[1] The Hasmonean college gave rise to the Sanhedrim which existed from 107 B.C. till A.D. 180, surviving the terrible disasters of the nation.[2] The latter was merely a formal and more definite development of the Hasmonean senate or college. The doubts about various books

[1] We know little of the constitution of the Hasmonean *gerusia* or senate. It was an administrative and executive body, having as such the management of religious affairs. Scribes belonged to it as they did to the Sanhedrim. The latter in particular, not excluding the priests, had to do with the sacred books.

[2] The Sanhedrim *properly so called* ceased under R. Judah I. Ha-Nasi, when the council of seventy members, which sat at Sepphoris before his patriarchate, transferred its privileges to him, on his removal to that place. The court was thus merged in the patriarch.

which Hananiah, son of Hezekiah, the famous head of a school, is said to have resolved in his old age, imply a diligent study of the national literature, if not a revision of the text; and the Tannaite college at Jabneh must have cared for the same things, as it had to deal with similar objections. After the last canon was made, about a century or more anterior to the Christian era, the text was not considered inviolate by the learned Jews; it received modifications and interpolations long after. The process of redaction had not ceased before the time of Christ. This was owing, among other causes, to the state of parties among the Jews, as well as the intrusion of Greek literature and culture, whose influence the Palestinian Jews themselves were not able altogether to withstand. When Jeremiah accused the Scribes of falsifying the law by their lying pen (viii. 8), it may be inferred that the same process took place afterwards—that offensive

things were removed, and alterations made continuously down to the close of the canon, if not after. The corrections consisted of additions and changes of letters, being indicated in part by the most ancient versions and the traditions of the Jews themselves who often knew what stood in the text at first, and why it was altered. They are also indicated by the nature of the passage itself viewed in the light of the state of religion at the time. Here sober judgment must guard against unnecessary conjectures. Some changes are apparent, as the plural *oaks* in Genesis xiii. 18, xiv. 13, xviii. 1, Deuteronomy xi. 30, for the singular *oak*; and the plural *gods* in Exodus xxxii. 4 for the singular *god*. So 2 Sam. vii. 23, (comp. 1 Chron. xvii. 21, and LXX.[1] and Deuteronomy xxxii. 8,[2] have been altered. Popper and

[1] Geiger's *Urschrift*, p. 288.

[2] See De Goeje in the *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, Jaargang II. (1868) p. 179, &c.

Geiger have probably assumed too much correction on the part of the Scribes and others; though they have drawn attention to the subject in the spirit of original criticism.

If it be asked on what principle books were admitted into the canon, a single answer does not suffice. One and the same criterion did not determine the process at all times. The leading principle with which the first canon-makers set out was to collect all the documents of Hebrew antiquity. This seems to have guided Ezra, if not Nehemiah. The nation early imbued with the theocratic spirit and believing itself the chosen of God, was favourably inclined towards documents in which that standpoint was assumed. The legal and ethical were specially valued. The prophetic claimed a divine origin; the lyric or poetic touched and elevated the ideal faculty on which religion acts. But the leading principle which actuated Ezra and Nehemiah was gradually modified, amid the

growing compass of the national literature and the consciousness that prophecy ceased with Malachi. When the latest part of the canon had to be selected from a literature almost contemporaneous, regard was had to such productions as resembled the old in spirit. Orthodoxy of contents was the dominant criterion. But this was a difficult thing, for various works really anonymous, though wearing the garb of old names and histories, were in existence, so that the boundary of the third part became uncertain and fluctuating.

The principle that actuated Ezra in making the first canon was a religious and patriotic one. From his treatment of the oldest law books we infer that he did not look upon them as inviolable. Venerable they were, and so far sacred; but neither perfect nor complete for all time. In his view they were not unconditionally authoritative. Doubtless they had a high value as the productions of inspired lawgivers and

men of a prophetic spirit; but the redaction to which he submitted them shows no superstitious reverence. With him *canonical* and *holy* were not identical. Nor does the idea of an *immediate, divine* authority appear to have dominated the mind of Nehemiah and his scholars in the selection of books. Like Ezra they reverenced the productions of the prophets, poets, and historians to whom their countrymen were indebted in the past for religious or political progress; but they did not look upon them as the offspring of unerring wisdom. How could they, when witnessing repetitions and smaller contradictions in the books collected?

The same remarks apply to the third canon. *Direct divinity* of origin was not the criterion which determined the reception of a book into it. The chief consideration was its character and authorship. Did it breathe the old spirit, or proceed from one venerated for his wisdom?

Was it like the old orthodox productions; or did it bear the name of one renowned for his piety and knowledge of divine things? The stamp of antiquity was necessary in a certain sense; ancient authorship was not. The theocratic spirit was the leading consideration. Ecclesiastes was admitted because it bore the name of Solomon; and Daniel's apocalyptic writings, because veiled under a prophet of note. New psalms were taken in because of their association with much older ones in the temple service. But the first book of Maccabees was excluded, though written in Hebrew. It is still more remarkable that Sirach was put among the external productions; but this was owing not so much to its recent origin, for it is older than the book of Daniel, as to its being an apparent echo of the Proverbs, and therefore unnecessary. Yet it was long after assigned to the Hagiographa, and quoted as such by several rabbis. Baruch was also left out, though it is

as old as Daniel, if not much older; and professes to have been written by Jeremiah's friend, in Babylon.

In attributing a divinity to the canonical books intelligent Jews must have meant the same as that assigned to human attributes and physical phenomena—a divinity resulting from the overleaping of second causes, in the absence of inductive philosophy. Even so, the imperfection conditioned by the nature of the created could not be hid. In short the books contained the word of God.

Of the three divisions, *the Law* or Pentateuch was most highly venerated by the Jews. It was the first translated into Greek; and in Philo's view was inspired in a way peculiar to itself. *The Prophets*, or second division, occupied a somewhat lower place in their estimation, but were read in the public services as the law had been before. The *c'tubim*, or third division, was not looked upon as equal to the

Prophets in importance: only the five Megiloth were publicly read. The three parts of the collection present the three gradations of sanctity which the books assumed successively in Israelite estimation. A certain reverence was attached to all as soon as they were made canonical; but the reverence was not of equal height, and the supposed authority was proportionally varied.[1] The consciousness of prophetism being extinct soon after the return from Babylon was a genuine instinct. With the extinction of the Jewish state the religious spirit almost evaporated. The idealism which the old prophets proclaimed in contrast with the symbolic religion of the state gave place to forms and an attachment to the *written* law. Religion came to be a thing of the understanding, the subject of learned treatment; and its essence was reduced to dogmas or precepts.

[1] Dillmann, in the *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie, dritter Band*, p. 422.

Thus it ceased to be spiritual, or a thing in which the heart had free scope for its highest aspirations. The narrow prophetism that appeared after the restoration was little more than an echo of the past, falling in with an external and written legalism. The literature of the people deteriorated in quality, and prophecy became *apocalypse.*

When the three divisions were united, the ecclesiastical respect which had gathered round the law and the prophets from ancient times began to be transferred to the *c'tubim.* A belief in their sanctity increased apace in the 1st century before the Christian era, so that *sacredness* and *canonicity* were almost identical. The doubts of individuals, it is true, were still expressed respecting certain books of the *c'tubim,* but they had no perceptible effect upon the current opinion. The sanctity attaching to the last division as well as the others did not permit the total displacement of any part.

The passage in Josephus already quoted shows the state of the canon about A.D. 100. According to it, he considered it to have been closed at the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus, whom he identifies with the Ahasuerus of Esther, 464-424 B.C. The books were divine, so that none dared to add to, substract from, or alter them. To him the canon was something belonging to the venerable past, and inviolable. In other words, all the books were peculiarly sacred. Although we can scarcely think this to be his private opinion merely, it is probably expressed in exaggerated terms, and hardly tallies with his use of the third Esdras in preference to the canonical Ezra. His authority, however, is small. One who believed that Esther was the youngest book in the canon, who looked upon Ecclesiastes as Solomon's, and Daniel as an exile production, cannot be trusted implicitly. In his time the historical sense of the book of Daniel

was misapprehended; for after the Grecian dynasty had fallen without the fulfilment of the Messianic prophecy connected with it, the Roman empire was put into its place. Hence various allusions in The History of the Jewish Wars.[1] The passage in the Antiquities,[2] about Alexander the Great and the priests in the Temple at Jerusalem is apocryphal. In any case, he does not furnish a genuine list of the canonical books any more than Philo. The usual Pharisaic view of the time is undoubtedly given, that the canon was then complete and sacred. The decision proceeded from that part of the nation who ruled both over school and people, and regained supremacy after the destruction of the temple; *i.e.* from the Pharisee-sect to which Josephus belonged. It was a conclusion of orthodox Judaism.

The origin of the *threefold* division of the

[1] iv. 6, sec. 3, and vi. 2, sec. 1.
[2] xi. 8, sec. 5.

canon is not, as Oehler supposes,[8] a reflection of the different stages of religious development through which the nation passed, as if the foundation were the Law, the ulterior tendency in its objective aspect the Prophets, and its subjective aspect the Hagiographa. The books of Chronicles and others refute this arbitrary conception. The triplicity lies in the manner in which the books were collected. Men who belonged to different periods and possessed different degrees of culture worked successively in the formation of the canon. It resulted out of the circumstances in which it was made, and the subjective ideas of those who made it.

The places of the separate books within the first division or *Torah*, were determined by the succession of the historical events narrated.

[8] Article "Kanon" in Herzog's *Encyklopædie*, vol. vii., p. 253; and the same author's *Prolegomena zur Theologie des alt. Test.*, pp. 91, 92.

The second division naturally begins with Moses's successor, Joshua. Judges, Samuel, and Kings follow according to the regular chronology. To the former prophets, as Joshua —Kings were called, the latter were attached, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; succeeded by the twelve minor prophets, arranged for the most part according to their times, though the length of individual prophecies also influenced their position, together with similarity of contents. The arrangement of books in the third division depended on their age, character, and authors. The Psalms were put first, because David was supposed to be the author of many, and on account of their intrinsic value in promoting the religious life of the people. After the Psalms came the three poetical works attributed to Solomon, with the book of Job among them,—Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Ecclesiastes. The book of Esther followed, since it was intended to

further the observance of the Purim feast; with the late book of Daniel, which had some affinity to Esther in its relation to heathenism and to Greek life. To Ezra and Nehemiah, which were adopted before the other part of the Chronicle-book and separated from it, were added the so-called Chronicles. Such was the original succession of the third division or *c'tubim;* but it did not remain unaltered. For the use of the synagogue the five Megiloth were put together, so that Ruth, originally the last part of Judges; and the Lamentations, appended at first to Jeremiah's prophecies, were taken out of the second and put into the third canon. This caused a separation of Canticles and Ecclesiastes.

CHAPTER III.

THE SAMARITAN AND ALEXANDRIAN CANONS.

THE Samaritan canon consists of the Pentateuch alone. This restricted collection is owing to the fact, that when the Samaritans separated from the Jews and began their worship on Gerizim, no more than the Mosaic writings had been invested by Ezra with canonical dignity. The hostile feeling between the rivals hindered the reception of books subsequently canonized. The idea of their having the oldest and most sacred part in its entirety satisfied their spiritual wants. Some have thought that the Sadducees, who already existed as a party before the Maccabean period, agreed with the Samaritans in rejecting all but the Pentateuch; yet this is doubtful. It

is true that the Samaritans themselves say so ;[1] and that some of the church fathers, Origen, Jerome, and others agree; but little reliance can be put on the statement. The latter, perhaps, confounded the Samaritans and Sadducees. It is also noteworthy that Christ in refuting the Sadducees appeals to the Pentateuch alone; yet the conclusion, that he did so because of their admitting no more than that portion does not follow.

The Alexandrian canon differed from the Palestinian. The Greek translation commonly called the Septuagint contains some later productions which the Palestinian Jews did not adopt, not only from their aversion to Greek literature generally, but also the recent origin of the books, perhaps also their want of prophetic sanction. The closing line of the third part in the Alexandrian canon was more or less fluctuating—capable of admitting recent writ-

[1] See Abulfatach's *Annal. Samar.*, p. 102, 9, &c.

ings appearing under the garb of old names and histories, or embracing religious subjects; while the Palestinian collection was pretty well determined, and all but finally settled. The judgment of the Alexandrians was freer than that of their brethren in the mother country. They had even separated in a measure from the latter, by erecting a temple at Leontopolis; and their enlargement of the canon was another step of divergence. Nor had they the criterion of language for the separation of canonical and uncanonical; both classes were before them in the same tongue. The enlarged canon was not formally sanctioned; it had not the approval of the Sanhedrim; yet it was to the Alexandrians what the Palestinian one was to the Palestinians. If Jews who were not well acquainted with Hebrew used the apocryphal and canonical books alike, it was a matter of feeling and custom; and if those who knew the old language better adhered to the canonical

more closely, it was a matter of tradition and language. The former set little value on the prevalent consciousness of the race that the spirit of prophecy was extinct; their view of the Spirit's operation was larger. The latter clung to the past with all the more tenacity that the old life of the nation had degenerated.

The Alexandrian Jews opened their minds to Greek culture and philosophy, appropriating new ideas, and explaining their Scriptures in accordance with wider conceptions of the divine presence; though such adaptation turned aside the original sense. Consciously or unconsciously they were preparing Judaism in some degree to be the religion of humanity. But the Rabbins shut out those enlarging influences, confining their religion within the narrow traditions of one people. The process by which they conserved the old belief helped to quench its spirit, so that it became an antique skeleton, powerless beside the new civilisation which had followed

the wake of Alexander's conquests. Rabbinical Judaism proved its incapacity for regenerating the world; having no affinity for the philosophy of second causes, or the exercise of reason beneath the love of a Father who sees with equal eye as God of all. Its isolation nourished a sectarian tendency. Tradition, having no creative power like revelation, had taken the place of it; and it could not ward off the senility of Judaism; for its creations are but feeble echoes of prophetic utterances, weak imitations of poetic inspiration or of fresh wisdom. They are of the understanding rather than the reason. The tradition which Geiger describes as the life-giving soul of Judaism—the daughter of revelation, enjoying the same rights with her mother—a spiritual power that continues ever to work—an emanation from the divine Spirit, is not, indeed, the thing which has stiffened Judaism into Rabbinism; but neither is it tradition proper; it is reason working upon revelation, and moulding

it into a new system. *Such tradition* serves but to show the inability of genuine Judaism to assimilate philosophic thought. *Rationalising* should not be styled the operation of tradition.

The truth of these remarks is evident from a comparison of two books, exemplifying Alexandrian and Palestinian Judaism respectively. The Wisdom of Solomon shows the enlarging effect of Greek philosophy. Overpassing Jewish particularism, it often approaches Christianity in doctrine and spirit, so that some have even assumed a Christian origin for it. The Wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach has not the doctrine of immortality. Death is an eternal sleep, and retribution takes place in this life. The Jewish theocracy is the centre of history; Israel the elect people; and all wisdom is embodied in the law. The writer is shut up within the old national ideas, and leans upon the writings in which they are expressed. Thus the Hagiographical canon of Judea, conservative as it is,

and purer in a sense, presents a narrower type than the best specimens of the Alexandrian one. The genial breath of Aryan culture had not expanded its Semitism.

The identity of the Palestinian and Alexandrian canons must be abandoned. It is said, indeed, that Philo neither mentions nor quotes the Greek additions; but neither does he quote several canonical books. According to Eichhorn, no fewer than eight of the latter are unnoticed by him.[1] Besides, he had peculiar views of inspiration, and quoted loosely from memory. Believing as he did in the inspiration of the Greek version as a whole, it is difficult to think that he made a distinction between the different parts of it. The argument for the identity of the two canons deduced from 4 Esdras xiv. 44, &c., as if the twenty-four open books were distinguished from the other writings dictated to Ezra, is of no force, both because the reading is

[1] *Einleitung in das alte Testament*, vol. i. p. 133.

uncertain; and even if seventy be distinguished from twenty-four in the passage, verisimilitude required that an Egyptian Jew himself must make Ezra conform to the old Palestinian canon. It is also alleged that the grandson of Jesus Sirach, who translated his grandfather's work during his abode in Egypt, knew no difference between the Hebrew and Greek canon, though he speaks of the Greek version; but he speaks as a Palestinian, without having occasion to allude to the difference between the canonical books of the Palestinian and Egyptian Jews. The latter may have reckoned the apocryphal writings in the third division; and therefore the translator of Jesus Sirach could recognise them in the ordinary classification. The mention of *three* classes is not opposed to their presence in the third. The general use of an enlarged canon in Egypt cannot be denied, though it was somewhat loose, not regarded as a completed collection, and without

express rabbinical sanction. The very way in which apocryphal are inserted among canonical books in the Alexandrian canon, shows the equal rank assigned to both. Esdras first and second succeed the Chronicles; Tobit and Judith are between Nehemiah and Esther; the Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach follow Canticles; Baruch succeeds Jeremiah; Daniel is followed by Susanna and other productions of the same class; and the whole closes with the three books of Maccabees. Such is the order in the Vatican MS.

The threefold division of the canon, indicating three stages in its formation, has continued. Josephus, indeed, gives another, based on the nature of the separate books, not on MSS. We learn nothing from him of its history, which is somewhat remarkable, considering that he did not live two centuries after the last work had been added. The account of the canon's final arrangement was unknown to him.

CHAPTER IV.

NUMBER AND ORDER OF THE SEPARATE BOOKS.

THE number of the books was variously estimated. Josephus gives twenty-two, which was the usual number among Christian writers in the second, third, and fourth centuries, having been derived from the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Origen, Jerome, and others have it. It continued longest among the teachers of the Greek Church, and is even in Nicephorus's stichometry.[1] The enumeration in question has Ruth with Judges, and Lamentations with Jeremiah. In Epiphanius[2] the number twenty-seven is found, made by taking the alphabet

[1] See Credner's *Zur Geschichte des Kanons*, p. 124.

[2] *De mens. et pond.*, chapters 22, 23, vol. ii. p. 180, ed. Petav.

enlarged with the five final letters, and dividing Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles into two books each. The Talmud has twenty-four,[1] which originated in the Greek alphabet, and probably proceeded from Alexandria. After the Pentateuch and the former prophets, which are in the usual order, it gives Jeremiah as the first of the later, succeeded by Ezekiel and Isaiah with the twelve minor prophets. The Talmud knows no other reason for such an order than that it was made according to the contents of the prophetic books, not according to the times of the writers. This solution is unsatisfactory. It is more probable that chronology had to do with the arrangement.[2] After the anonymous collection or second part of Isaiah had been joined to the first or authentic prophecies, the lateness of these oracles brought Isaiah into the third place among the greater prophets. The Talmudic

[1] *Baba Bathra*, fol. 14, 2.

[2] See *Fürst, Der Kanon u. s. w.* p. 14, &c.

order of the Hagiographa is Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra, Chronicles. Here Ruth precedes the Psalter, coming as near the former prophets as possible; for it properly belongs to them, the contents associating it with the Judges' time. The Talmudic order is that usually adopted in German MSS.

The Masoretic arrangement differs from the Talmudic in putting Isaiah before Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The Hagiographa are, Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra (with Nehemiah), Chronicles.[1] This is usually adopted in Spanish MSS. But MSS. often differ arbitrarily, because transcribers did not consider themselves bound to any one arrangement.[2] According to some, a very old testimony to the

[1] Hody, *De Bibliorum textibus originalibus*, p. 644.

[2] Hody gives lists of the order in which the books stand in some early printed editions and in a few MSS., p. 645.

commencing and concluding books of the third division is given by the New Testament (Luke xxiv. 44; Matthew xxiii. 35), agreeably to which the Psalms were first and the Chronicles last; but this is inconclusive.

The Alexandrian translators, as we have seen already, placed the books differently from the Palestinian Jews. In their version Daniel comes after Ezekiel, so that it is put beside the greater prophets. Was this done by Jews or Christians? Perhaps by the latter, who put it between the greater and lesser prophets, or in other words, out of the third into the second division, because of dogmatic grounds, and so effaced a trace of the correct chronology. Little importance, however, can be attached to the order of the books in the Septuagint; because the work was done at different times by different persons. But whatever may have been the arrangement of the parts when

the whole was complete, we know that it was disturbed by Protestants separating the apocryphal writings and putting them all together.

CHAPTER V.

USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT BY THE FIRST CHRISTIAN WRITERS, AND THE FATHERS TILL THE TIME OF ORIGEN.

THE writings of the New Testament show the authors' acquaintance with the apocryphal books. They have expressions and ideas derived from them. Stier collected one hundred and two passages which bear some resemblance to others in the Apocrypha;[1] but they needed sifting, and were cut down to a much smaller number by Bleek. They are James i. 19, from Sirach v. 11 and iv. 29; 1 Peter i. 6, 7, from Wisdom iii. 3-7; Hebrews xi. 34, 35, from 2 Maccabees vi. 18—vii. 42; Hebrews i. 3, from Wisdom vii. 26, &c.; Romans i. 20-32, from Wisdom xiii.-xv.; Romans ix. 21, from Wisdom

[1] *Die Apokryphen, u. s. w.*, p. 14, &c.

xv. 7; Eph. vi. 13-17, from Wisdom v. 18-20; 1 Cor. ii. 10, &c., from Judith viii. 14. Others are less probable.[1] When Bishop Cosin says, that "in all the New Testament we find not any one passage of the apocryphal books to have been alleged either by Christ or His apostles for the confirmation of their doctrine,"[2] the argument, though based on a fact, is scarcely conclusive; else Esther, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, and other works might be equally discredited. Yet it is probable that the New Testament writers, though quoting the Septuagint much more than the original, were disinclined to the additional parts of the Alexandrian canon. They were Palestinian themselves, or had in view Judaisers of a narrow creed. Prudential motives, no less than a predisposition in favour of the old national canon, may have hindered them from expressly citing any apocryphal

[1] *Studien und Kritiken* for 1853, p. 267, &c.
[2] *A Scholastical History of the Canon*, p. 22.

production. The apostle Paul, at least, and probably the other writers of the New Testament, believed in the literal inspiration of the Biblical books, for he uses an argument in the Galatian epistle which turns upon the singular or plural of a noun.[1] And as the inspiration of the Septuagint translation was commonly held by the Christians of the early centuries, it may be that the apostles and evangelists made no distinction between its parts. Jude quotes Enoch, an apocryphal work not in the Alexandrian canon; so that he at least had no rigid notions about the difference of canonical and uncanonical writings. Still we know that the compass of the Old Testament canon was somewhat unsettled to the

[1] See Rothe, *Zur Dogmatik, Studien u. Kritiken* for 1860, p. 67, &c. The apostle's argument rests on the occurrence of the singular *seed* (σπέρμα) in Genesis xvii. 8 (LXX.), not the plural *seeds* (σπέρματα); though the plural of the corresponding Hebrew word could not have been used, because it has a different signification. (Epist. to the Galatians iii. 16.)

Christians of the first century, as it was to the Hellenist Jews themselves. It is true that the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms were universally recognized as authoritative; but the extent of the third division was indefinite, so that the non-citation of the three books respecting which there was a difference of opinion among the Jews may not have been accidental. Inasmuch, however, as the Greek-speaking Jews received more books than their Palestinian brethren, the apostles and their immediate successors were not disinclined to the use of the apocryphal productions. The undefined boundary of the canon facilitated the recognition of other sacred writings, such as the primitive records of the new revelation.

The early fathers used the Greek Bible, as almost all of them were ignorant of Hebrew. Thus restricted, they naturally considered its parts alike, citing apocryphal and canonical

in the same way. Accordingly, Irenæus[1] quotes Baruch under the name of "Jeremiah the prophet;"[2] and the additions to Daniel as "Daniel the prophet."[3] Clement of Alexandria[4] uses the apocryphal books like the canonical ones, for explanation and proof indiscriminately. He is fond of referring to Baruch, which he cites upwards of twenty-four times in the second book of his *Pædagogus*, and in a manner to show that he esteemed it as highly as many other parts of the Old Testament. A passage from Baruch is introduced by the phrase,[5] "the divine Scripture says;" and another from Tobit by[6] "Scripture has briefly signified this, saying." Tertullian[7] quotes the Wisdom of

[1] † 202 A.D.

[2] *Advers. Hares.*, v. 35, referring to Baruch iv. 36; and v. p. 335, ed. Massuet.

[3] *Ibid.* iv., 26, referring to Daniel xiii. 20 in the Septuagint.

[4] † 220 A. D.

[5] *Pædagog.* ii. 3.

[6] *Stromata*, ii. 23.

[7] † 220 A.D.

Solomon expressly as Solomon's;[1] and introduces Sirach by "as it is written."[2] He cites Baruch as Jeremiah.[3] He also believes in the authenticity of the book of Enoch, and defends it at some length.[4] Cyprian often cites the Greek additions to the Palestinian canon. He introduces Tobit with the words "as it is written,"[5] or "divine Scripture teaches, saying;"[6] and Wisdom with, "the Holy Spirit shows by Solomon."[7] The African fathers followed the Alexandrian canon without scruple.

Melito of Sardis[8] made it his special business to inquire among the Palestinian Jews about the number and names of their canonical books; and the result was the

[1] *Advers. Valentinianos*, ch. 2.
[2] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, ch. 2.
[3] *Contra Gnosticos*, ch. 8.
[4] *De Habitu Muliebri*, ch. 3.
[5] *Epist.* 55, p. 110, ed. Fell.
[6] *De Orat. Domin.*, p. 153.
[7] *De Exhortat. Martyrii*, ch. 12, p. 182.
[8] † After 171.

following list:—the five books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two of Chronicles, the Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, Job, Isaiah, Jeremiah, the twelve in one book, Daniel, Ezekiel, Ezra.[1] Here Ezra includes Nehemiah; and Esther is absent, because the Jews whom he consulted did not consider it canonical.

Origen's[2] list does not differ much from the Palestinian one. After the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Kings first and second, Samuel, Chronicles, come Ezra first and second, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Isaiah, Jeremiah with Lamentations and the epistle, Daniel, Ezekiel, Job, Esther. Besides these there are the Maccabees, which are inscribed *Sarbeth Sarbane el.*[3] The twelve prophets are omitted in the Greek; but the mistake is rectified in

[1] *Ap.* Euseb. H. E., lib. iv. ch. 26.

[2] † 254 A.D.

[3] *Ap.* Euseb. H. E., lib. vi. ch. 25.

Rufinus's Latin version, where they follow Canticles, as in Hilary and Cyril of Jerusalem. It is remarkable that Baruch is given, and why? Because Origen took it from the MSS. of the Septuagint he had before him, in which the epistle is attributed to Jeremiah. But the catalogue had no influence upon his practice. He followed the prevailing view of the extended canon. Sirach is introduced by "for this also *is written*;[1] the book of Wisdom is cited as *a divine word*;[2] Tobit as *Scripture*.[3] His view of the additions to the books of Daniel and Esther, as well as his opinion about Tobit, are sufficiently expressed in the epistle to Africanus, so that scattered quotations from these parts of Scripture can be properly estimated. Of the history of Susanna he ventures to say that the Jews withdrew it on purpose from the people.[4]

[1] *Comment. in Joann.*, tom. xxxii. ch. 14, ed. Huet. p. 409.
[2] *Contra Cels.* iii. 72; vol. i. p. 494, ed. Delarue.
[3] *De Oratione*, ii. p. 215.
[4] *Opp.* ed. Delarue, vol. i. p. 12.

He seems to argue in favour of books used and read in the churches, though they may be put out of the canon by the Jews. As divine Providence had preserved the sacred Scriptures, no alteration should be made in the ecclesiastical tradition respecting books sanctioned by the churches though they be external to the Hebrew canon.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON IN THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES.

THE first Christians relied on the Old Testament as their chief religious book. To them it was of divine origin and authority. The New Testament writings came into gradual use, by the side of the older Jewish documents, according to the times in which they appeared and the reputed names of the authors. After the first and third gospels, especially the former, had undergone processes of re-writing and redaction, they appeared in their present form early in the second century. The second gospel not long after, was followed by the fourth. The last of the New Testament documents was Peter's second epistle.

When Marcion came from Pontus to Rome

(144 A.D.,) he brought with him a Scripture-collection consisting of ten Pauline epistles. Those addressed to Timothy and Titus, with the epistle to the Hebrews, were not in it. The gospel of Marcion was Luke's in an altered state. From this and other facts we conclude that external parties were the first who carried out the idea of collecting Christian writings, and of putting them either beside or over against the sacred books of the Old Testament, in support of their systems. As to Basilides (125 A.D.), his supposed quotations from the New Testament in Hippolytus are too precarious to be trusted.[1] It is inferred from statements in Origen and Jerome that he had a gospel of his own somewhat like St Luke's, but extra-canonical. His son Isidore and succeeding disciples used Matthew's gospel. Jerome says that Marcion and Basilides denied the

[1] Davidson's *Introduction to the Study of the N. Testam.*, vol. ii. p. 388.

Pauline authorship of the epistle to the Hebrews and the pastoral ones.[1] It is also doubtful whether Valentinus's (140-166 A.D.) alleged citations from the New Testament can be relied upon. The passages of this kind ascribed to him by the fathers belong in a great measure to his disciples. The fragment of a letter preserved by Clement of Alexandria in the second book of the Stromata, has been thought to contain references to the gospels of Matthew and Luke; but the fact is doubtful. Nor has Henrici proved that Valentinus used John's gospel.[2] But his followers, including Ptolemy (180 A.D.) and Heracleon (185-200 A.D.), quote the Gospels and other portions of the New Testament.[3] From Hippolytus's account of

[1] *Explanatio in Epist. ad Titum*, vol. iv. p. 407, ed. Benedict.

[2] *Die Valentinianische Gnosis und die heilige Schrift*, p. 75.

[3] A good deal of manipulation has been needlessly employed for the purpose of placing these heretics as early as possible; but nothing definite can be extracted from Irenæus's notices of them. Hippolytus's use of the present tense, in speaking of them, renders it probable that they were nearly his contemporaries.

the Ophites, Peratæ, and Sethians, we infer that the Christian writings were much employed by them. They rarely cite an apocryphal work. More than one hundred and sixty citations from the New Testament have been gathered out of their writings.[1] We may admit that these Ophites and Peratæ were of early origin, the former being the oldest known of the Gnostic parties; but there is no proof that the acquaintance with the New Testament which Hippolytus attributes to them belongs to the first rather than the second half of the second century. The early existence of the sect does not show an early citation of the Christian books by it, especially of John's gospel; unless its primary were its last stage. Later and earlier Ophites are not distinguished in the *Philosophumena.* Hence there is a presumption that the author had the former in view, which is favoured by no mention of them

[1] See the Indexes to Duncker and Schneidewin's edition.

occurring in the "Adversus omnes Hæreses" usually appended to Tertullian's *Præscriptiones Hæreticorum*, and by Irenæus's derivation of their heresy from that of Valentinus. The latter father does not even speak of the Peratæ. Clement of Alexandria is the first who alludes to them. The early heretics were desirous of confirming their peculiar opinions by the writings current among Catholic Christians, so that the formation of a canon by them began soon after the commencement of the second century, and continued till the end of it; contemporaneously with the development of a Catholic Church and its necessary adjunct a Catholic canon.

No New Testament canon, except a partial and unauthoritative one, existed till the latter half of the second century, that is, till the idea of a Catholic church began to be entertained. The living power of Christianity in its early stages had no need of books for its nurture.

But in the development of a church organization the internal rule of consciousness was changed into an external one of faith. The Ebionites or Jewish Christians had their favourite gospels and Acts. The gospel of Matthew was highly prized by them, existing as it did in various recensions, of which the gospel according to the Hebrews was one. Other documents, such as the Revelation of John; and the preaching of Peter, a Jewish-Christian history subsequently re-written and employed in the Clementine Recognitions and Homilies, were also in esteem. Even so late as 170-175 A.D., Hegesippus, a Jewish Christian, used the gospel according to the Hebrews and despised Paul's writings, in conformity with the leading principle of the party to which he belonged, viz., the identity of Jesus' words with the Old Testament. The Clementine Homilies (161-180 A.D.) used the four canonical gospels even the fourth (which is somewhat singular

in a writer who denies the deity of Christ,) and assigns it to the apostle John. The gospel according to the Egyptians was also employed. Paul's epistles were rejected of course, as well as the Acts; since the apostle of the Gentiles was pointed at in Simon Magus, whom Peter refutes. It is, therefore, obvious that a collection of the New Testament writings could make little progress among the Ebionites of the second century. Their reverence for the law and the prophets hindered another canon. Among the Gentile Christians the formation of a canon took place more rapidly, though Judaic influences retarded it even there. After Paul's epistles were interchanged between churches a few of them would soon be put together. A collection of this kind is implied in 2 Peter iii. 16. The pastoral epistles, which show a literary dependence on the authentic Pauline ones, with those of Peter, presuppose a similar collection; and this, along

with the Synoptists, existed before the fourth gospel. The Apocalypse and the epistle to the Hebrews were obnoxious to the Pauline churches, as Paul's letters were to the Jewish-Christian ones. Hence the former were outside the Pauline collections.

The apostolic fathers quote from the Old Testament, to them an inspired and sacred thing. They have scarcely any express citations from the New Testament. *Allusions* occur, especially to the epistles. The letter of Clement to the Corinthians (about 120 A.D.), does not use written gospels, though it presupposes an acquaintance with the epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Hebrews. Where *Scripture* is cited, or the expression "it is written" occurs, the Old Testament is meant.

Two passages have been adduced as taken from the canonical gospels, one in chapter xiii. the other in chapter xlvi. But all probability is against their derivation from the alleged

documents. A variety of considerations tend to shew that they proceed from some other evangelical source. It has also been argued that the quotation in the fifteenth chapter, "The Scripture says somewhere, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me," comes from Mark vii. 6 in which it varies from the Hebrew of Isaiah xxix. 13, as well as the Septuagint version. Clement therefore, so it is said, quotes the Old Testament through the medium of the gospels (Matthew xv. 8, Mark vii. 6). But the argument is inconclusive because the words agree closely enough with the Septuagint to render the supposition very probable that they are a memoriter citation from it. As they stand they coincide exactly neither with Mark nor the Septuagint.[1]

Hermas (about 130 A.D.) seems to have used

[1] There is ἄπεστιν instead of the Septuagint's and Mark's (Tischend.) ἀπέχει.

the epistles to the Ephesians and Hebrews, those of James and 1 Peter, perhaps, too, the Acts; but there is great uncertainty about the matter, and he has no *express* quotation from any part of the New Testament. The writer often alludes to words of Jesus found in Matthew's gospel, so that he may have been acquainted with it. References to the fourth gospel have been discovered by Keim and others; but they are invalid.[1]

Barnabas (about 119 A.D.) has but one quotation from the New Testament, if, indeed, it be such. Apparently, Matthew xx. 16 or xxii. 14 is introduced by "as it is written," showing that the gospel was considered *Scripture*.[2] This is the earliest trace of canonical authority being transferred from the Old Testament to Christian writings. But the citation is not certain. The

[1] See Holtzmann in Hilgenfeld's *Zeitschrift* for 1875, p. 40. &c.

[2] Epist. ch. iv.

original may be 4 Esdras viii. 3; and even if the writer took the words from Matthew's gospel, it is possible that he used "it is written" with reference to their prototype in the Old Testament. Of such interchanges examples occur in writers of the second century; and it is the more probable that this is one, from the fact that 4 Esdras is elsewhere considered a prophetic work, and therefore of canonical repute. Barnabas's citation of a gospel as canonical is wholly improbable, since even Justin, thirty years after, never quotes the New Testament writings as *Scripture.* The thing would be anomalous and opposed to the history of the first half of the second century. When these post-apostolic productions appeared, the New Testament writings did not stand on the same level with the Old, and were not yet esteemed *sacred* and *inspired* like the Jewish Scriptures. The Holy Spirit was thought to dwell in all Christians, without being confined

to a few writers. His influence was the common heritage of Christendom.

As far as we can judge from Eusebius's account of Papias[1] (about 150 A.D.), that writer knew nothing of a New Testament canon. He speaks of Matthew and Mark; but it is now most probable that he had documents which either formed the basis of our present Matthew and Mark, or were taken into them and written over.[2] According to Andreas of Cæsarea he

[1] *Hist. Eccles.* iii. 39.

[2] A small body of literature originating in the fragment of Papias preserved by Eusebius (Hist. Eccles. III., 39, 1-4) has appeared; though it is difficult to obtain satisfactory conclusions. Not only have Weiffenbach and Leimbach written treatises on the subject, but other scholars have entered into it more or less fully,—Zahn, Steitz, Riggenbach, Hilgenfeld, Lipsius, Keim, Martens, Loman, Holtzmann, Hausrath, Tietz, and Lightfoot. The fragment is not of great weight in settling the authenticity of the four gospels. Indirectly indeed it throws some light on the connection of two evangelists with written memoirs of the life of Jesus; but it rather suggests than solves various matters of importance. It is tolerably clear that the gospels, if such they may be called, of which he speaks as written by Matthew and Mark, were not identical with the works now existing under the names of these evangelists; and that no safe conclusion can be

was acquainted with the Apocalypse of John; while Eusebius testifies to his knowledge of 1 Peter and 1 John. But he had no conception of canonical authority attaching to any part of the New Testament. His language implies the opposite, in that he prefers unwritten tradition to the gospel he speaks of. He neither felt the want nor knew the existence of *inspired* gospels.

We need not notice the three short Syriac epistles attributed to Ignatius, as we do not

drawn from Papias's silence about John's and Luke's as not then in existence. Neither the present gospels nor any other had been converted into *Scripture;* since he regarded oral traditions as more credible than written memoirs. Those who hold that the presbyter John was none other than the apostle, Eusebius having misunderstood the fragment and made a different John from the apostle, as well as the critics who deduce from the fragment the fact that John suffered martyrdom in Palestine, have not established these conclusions. Papias refers to the material he got for explaining the λογία rather than the source whence they were drawn. But whether he learnt directly from the elders, or indirectly as the preposition (παρὰ) would seem to indicate, and whether the sentence beginning with "What Andrew," &c., (τί Ἀνδρέας κ. τ. λ.) stands in apposition to the "words of the elders," (τοὺς τῶν πρεσβυτέρων λόγους) or not, are things uncertain.

believe them to be his, but of later origin. Traces of later ideas about the canonicity of the New Testament appear in the shorter Greek recension of the Ignatian epistles (about 175 A.D.) There *the Gospel* and *the Apostles* are recognized as the constituents of the book.[1] The writer also used the Gospel according to the Hebrews, for there is a quotation from it in the epistle to the Smyrnians.[2] The second part of the collection seems to have wanted the epistle to the Ephesians.[3] The two leading parties, long antagonistic, had now become united; the apostles Peter and Paul being mentioned together.[4] In the Testaments of the twelve patriarchs (about 170 A.D.), Paul's life is said to be described in "holy books," *i.e.*, his own epistles and the Acts.[5]

[1] *Epist. ad Philadelph.*, ch. 5. See Hefele's note on the passage. The other well-known passage in chapter viii. is too uncertain in reading and meaning to be adduced here.

[2] Chapter iii. [3] To the Ephesians, chapter xii.

[4] *Epist. ad Romanos*, iv.

[5] *Testam. Benj.* 11, p. 201, ed. Sinker.

Justin Martyr (150 A.D.) knew some of the synoptic gospels, the first and third. The evidence of his acquaintance with Mark's is but small. His knowledge of the fourth is denied by many, and zealously defended by others. Thoma finds proofs that Justin knew it well, and used it freely as a text-book of gnosis, without recognizing it as the historical work of an apostle; an hypothesis encumbered with difficulties.[1] Whatever be said about Justin's acquaintance with this gospel; its existence before 140 A.D. is incapable either of decisive or probable shewing. The Johannine authorship has receded before the tide of modern criticism; and though this tide is arbitrary at times, it is here irresistible. Apologists should abstain from strong assertions on a point so difficult, as that each "gospel is distinctly recognized by him;" for the noted passage in the dialogue

[1] *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 1875, p. 490, *et seq.*

with Trypho does not support them.[1] It is pretty certain that he employed an extra-canonical gospel, perhaps the so-called gospel of the Hebrews. He had also the older Acts of Pilate. Paul's epistles are never mentioned, though he doubtless knew them. Having little sympathy with Paulinism he attached his belief to the primitive apostles. The Apocalypse, 1 Peter, and 1 John he esteemed highly; the epistle to the Hebrews and the Acts he treated in the same way as the Pauline writings. Justin's canon, as far as divine authority and inspiration are concerned, was the Old Testament. He was merely on the threshold of a divine canon made up of primitive Christian writings, attaching no exclusive sanctity to those he used because they were not to him the only source of

[1] Ἐν τοῖς ἀπομνημονεύμασι, ἃ φημι ὑτὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἐκείνοις παρακολουθησάντων συντετάχθαι. Sec. 103. Here "the apostles" are not necessarily Matthew and John. Apocryphal gospels then current bore the name of apostles or their attendants,—of Peter, James, Nicodemus, Matthias, &c.

doctrine. Even of the Apocalypse he says, "A man among us named John, &c., wrote it."[1] In his time none of the gospels had been canonized, not even the synoptists, if, indeed, he knew them all. Oral tradition was the chief fountain of Christian knowledge, as it had been for a century. In his opinion this tradition was embodied in writing; but the documents in which he looked for all that related to Christ were not the gospels alone. He used others freely, not looking upon any as *inspired.* Though lessons out of Gospels (some of our present ones and others), as also out of the prophets, were read in assemblies on the first day of the week,[2] the act of converting the Christian writings into *Scripture* was posterior; for the mere reading of a gospel in churches on Sunday does not prove that it was considered divinely

[1] *Dialogus*, part ii., p. 315, ed. Thirlby. Comp. on Justin, Tjeenk-Willink's *Justinus Martyr in zijne Verhouding tot Paulus.*

[2] *Apolog.* i. 97, ed. Thirlby.

authoritative; and the use of the epistles, which formed the second and less valued part of the collection, must still have been limited.

Justin's disciple, Tatian (160-180 A.D.), wrote a *Diatessaron* or harmony of the gospels, which began, according to Ephrem Syrus, with John i. 1; but our knowledge of it is uncertain. The author omitted the genealogies of Jesus and everything belonging to His Davidic descent. He seems also to have put into it particulars derived from extra-canonical sources such as the Gospel according to the Hebrews. Doubtless he was acquainted with Paul's writings, as statements made in them are quoted; but he dealt freely with them according to Eusebius, and even rejected several epistles, probably first and second Timothy.[1]

In Polycarp's epistle (150-166 A.D.) there are reminiscences of the synoptic gospels; and most of Paul's epistles as well as 1 Peter were

[1] *Hieronymi Prooem. in Epist. ad Titum.*

used by the writer. But the idea of canonical authority, or a peculiar inspiration belonging to these writings, is absent.

Athenagoras of Athens wrote an apology addressed to Marcus Aurelius (176 A.D.) In it he uses written and unwritten tradition, testing all by the Old Testament which was his only authoritative canon. He makes no reference to the Christian documents, but adduces words of Jesus with the verb "he says." It is not clear whether he quoted from the Synoptics; perhaps the passages which are parallel to Matthew v. 44, 45, 46,[1] and Mark x. 6,[2] were taken from these; but the matter is somewhat uncertain. His treatise on the resurrection appeals to a passage in one of Paul's epistles.[3]

Dionysius of Corinth (170 A.D.) complains of the falsification of his writings, but consoles himself with the fact that the same is done to

[1] *Legat. pro Christ.* 11, 12. [2] *Ibid.* 33.
[3] Chapter xviii.

the "Scriptures of the Lord," *i.e.*, the gospels containing the Lord's words; or rather the two parts of the early collection, "the gospel" and "the apostle" together; which agrees best with the age and tenor of his letters.[1] If such be the meaning, the collection is put on a par with the Old Testament, and regarded as inspired. But Hegesippus still made a distinction between "the divine writings" (the Old Testament) and "the words of the Lord;[2] showing that Holy Scripture was nothing else, in his opinion, than the Jewish books. He also used the gospel of the Hebrews and Jewish tradition.[3] There is little doubt of his acquaintance with the Synoptics; but he did not employ them as "Scripture." In his view they were not on a par with the Old Testament.

In the second epistle of Peter (about A.D. 170) Paul's epistles are regarded as *Scripture* (iii. 16).

[1] *Ap.* Euseb. H.E., iv. 23. [2] *Ibid.* iv. 22.
[3] *Photii Bibliotheca*, cod. 232.

This seems to be the earliest example of the canonising of any New Testament portion. Here a brotherly recognition of the Gentile apostle and his productions takes the place of former opposition. A false interpretation of these epistles is even supposed to have induced a departure from primitive apostolic Christianity.

The letter of the churches at Vienne and Lyons (177 A.D.) has quotations from the epistles to the Romans, Philippians, 1 Timothy, 1 Peter, Acts, the gospels of Luke and John, the Apocalypse. The last is expressly called *Scripture.*[1] This shows a fusion of the two original tendencies, the Petrine and Pauline; and the formation of a Catholic church with a common canon of authority. Accordingly, the two apostles, Peter and Paul, are mentioned together.

Theophilus of Antioch (180 A.D.) was familiar with the gospels and most of Paul's epistles,

[1] *Ap.* Euseb. H.E., v. 1, p. 144, ed. Bright.

as also the Apocalypse. He puts the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures on the same level, because they proceeded from men who had the same spirit. Passages are cited from Paul as "the divine word."[1]

The author of the epistle to Diognetus (about 200 A.D.) shows his acquaintance with the gospels and Paul's epistles; but he never cites the New Testament by way of proof. Words are introduced into his discourse, in passing and from memory.[2]

The conception of a Catholic *canon* was realized about the same time as that of a Catholic *church*. One hundred and seventy years from the coming of Christ elapsed before the collection assumed a form that carried with it the idea of *holy* and *inspired*.[3] The way in

[1] θεῖος λόγος. *Ad Autolycum*, iii. 14, p. 1141, ed Migne.

[2] See Overbeck's *Studien zur Geschichte der alten Kirche, Abhandlung* I., in which the date of the letter is brought down till after Constantine. Surely this is too late.

[3] See Davidson's *Introduction to the Study of the New Testament*, vol. ii. p. 508, &c.

which it was done was by raising the apostolic writings higher and higher till they were of equal authority with the Old Testament, so that the church might have a rule of appeal. But by lifting the Christian productions up to the level of the old Jewish ones, injury was done to that living consciousness which feels the opposition between spirit and letter; the latter writings tacitly assuming or keeping the character of a perfect rule even as to form. The Old Testament was not brought down to the New; the New was raised to the Old. It is clear that the earliest church fathers did not use the books of the New Testament as sacred documents clothed with divine authority, but followed for the most part, at least till the middle of the second century, apostolic tradition orally transmitted. They were not solicitous about a canon circumscribed within certain limits.

In the second half, then, of the second

century there was a canon of the New Testament consisting of two parts called *the gospel*[1] and *the apostle*.[2] The first was complete, containing the four gospels alone; the second, which was incomplete, contained the Acts of the Apostles and epistles, *i.e.*, thirteen letters of Paul, one of Peter, one of John, and the Revelation. How and where this canon originated is uncertain. Its birthplace may have been Asia Minor, like Marcion's; but it may have grown about the same time in Asia Minor, Alexandria, and Western Africa. At all events, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian agree in recognizing its existence.

Irenæus had a canon which he adopted as apostolic. In his view it was of binding force and authoritative. This contained the four gospels, the Acts, thirteen epistles of Paul, the first epistle of John, and the Revelation. He had also a sort of appendix or deutero-canon,

[1] τὸ εὐαγγέλιον [2] ὁ ἀπόστολος.

which he highly esteemed without putting it on a par with the received collection, consisting of John's second epistle, the first of Peter, and the Shepherd of Hermas. The last he calls *Scripture* because it was prophetic.[1] The epistle to the Hebrews, that of Jude, James's, second Peter, and third John he ignored.

Clement's collection was more extended than Irenæus'. His appendix or deutero-canon included the epistle to the Hebrews, 2 John, Jude, the Apocalypse of Peter, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Epistles of Clement and Barnabas. He recognised no distinction between the New Testament writings except by the more frequent use of those generally received, and the degree of importance attached to them. Yet Barnabas is cited as an apostle.[2] So is the Roman Clement.[3] The Shepherd of Hermas is

[1] *Advers. Hæres.*, iv. 20, 2.
[2] *Stromata*, ii. 6, p. 965, ed. Migne.
[3] *Ibid.*, iv. 17, p. 1312.

spoken of as *divine*.[1] Thus the line of the Homologoumena is not marked off even to the same extent as in Irenæus, and is seen but obscurely.

Tertullian's canon consisted of the gospels, Acts, thirteen epistles of Paul, the Apocalypse, and 1 John. As an appendix he had the epistle to the Hebrews, that of Jude, the Shepherd of Hermas, 2 John probably, and 1 Peter. This deutero-canon was not regarded as authoritative. No trace occurs in his works of James' epistle, 2 Peter, and 3 John. He used the Shepherd, but thought little of it, with the Montanists in general.[2]

These three fathers did not fix the canon absolutely. Its limits were still unsettled. But they sanctioned most of the books now accepted as divine, putting some extra-canonical productions almost on the same level with the rest, if not in theory at least in practice.

The canon of Muratori is a fragmentary list

[1] *Ibid.*, i. 29, p. 928. [2] *De Pudicitia*, cap. 10.

which was made towards the end of the 2d century (170 A.D.) Its birthplace is uncertain, though there are traces of Roman origin. Its translation from the Greek is assumed, but that is uncertain. It begins with the four gospels in the usual order, and proceeds to the Acts, thirteen epistles of Paul, the epistles of John, that of Jude, and the Apocalypse. The epistle to the Hebrews, 1 and 2 Peter, and James are not named. The epistle "to the Laodiceans" is probably that to the Ephesians, which had this superscription in Marcion's canon; and that "to the Alexandrians" seems to be the epistle to the Hebrews. According to the usual punctuation, both are said to have been forged in Paul's name, an opinion which may have been entertained among Roman Christians about 170 A.D. The Epistle to the Hebrews was rejected in the west, and may have been thought a supposititious work in the interests of Paulinism, with some reason because

of its internal character.[1] The story about the origin of the fourth gospel with its apostolic and episcopal attestation, evinces a desire to establish the authenticity of a work which had not obtained universal acceptance at the time. It is difficult to make out the meaning in various places; and there is considerable diversity of opinion among expositors of the document.[2]

The stichometrical list of the Old and New Testament Scriptures in the Latin of the Clermont MS. (D), was that *read* in the African Church in the 3d century. It is peculiar. After the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and the historical books, follow Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Wisdom, Sirach, the

[1] Perhaps a comma should be put after *nomine*, and *fincte* joined to what follows, to the *alia plura* said to be forged in the interest of Marcion.

[2] It is printed and copiously commented on by Credner in his *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanon*, edited by Volkmar, p. 141, &c., and by Westcott *On the Canon*, Appendix C, p. 466, 2d edition. Many others have explained it; last of all Hilgenfeld.

twelve minor prophets, the four greater; three books of the Macabbees, Judith, Esdras, Esther, Job, and Tobit. In the New Testament, the four gospels, Matthew, John, Mark, Luke, are succeeded by ten epistles of Paul, two of Peter, the epistle of James, three of John, and that of Jude. The epistle to the Hebrews (characterized as that of Barnabas), the Revelation of John, Acts of the Apostles, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Acts of Paul, the Revelation of Peter, follow. There are thus three New Testament works, afterwards reckoned apocryphal. It is possible that the carelessness of a transcriber may have caused some of the singularities observable in this list; such as the omission of the epistles to the Philippians and Thessalonians; but the end shows a freer idea of books fit for reading than what was usual even at that early time in the African Church.[1]

[1] Tischendorf edited the Pauline epistles from this MS. Lipsiæ, 1852.

In Syria a version of the New Testament for the use of the church was made early in the 3d century. This work, commonly called the Peshito, wants 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and the Apocalypse. It has, however, all the other books, including the epistle of James and that to the Hebrews. The last two were received as apostolic.

Towards the middle of the 3d century Origen's testimony respecting the Canon[1] is of great value. He seems to have distinguished three classes of books—authentic ones, whose apostolic origin was generally admitted, those not authentic, and a middle-class not generally recognised or in regard to which his own opinion wavered. The first contained those already adopted at the beginning of the century both in the East and West, with the Apocalypse, and the epistle to the Hebrews *so far as it contains Pauline ideas*;[2] to the second belongs

[1] † 254 A.D.

[2] τὰ ἐν τῇ διαθήκῃ βιβλία, ἐνδιάθηκα, ὁμολογούμενα.

the Shepherd of Hermas, though he hesitated a little about it, the epistle of Barnabas, the Acts of Paul, the gospel according to the Hebrews, the gospel of the Egyptians, and the preaching of Peter[1]; to the third, the epistle of James, that of Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John.[2] The separation of the various writings is not formally made, nor does Origen give a list of them. His classification is gathered from his works; and though its application admitted of considerable latitude, he is cautious enough, appealing to the tradition of the church, and throwing in qualifying expressions.[3]

The Canon of Eusebius[4] is given at length in his *Ecclesiastical History*.[5] He divides the

[1] νόθα.

[2] Ap. Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.*, vi. 25; iii. 25, ἀντιλεγόμενα.

[3] See Euseb., *H. E.*, vi. 25; *Comment. in Matth.*, iii. p. 463; *Ibid.*, p. 814; *Comment. in ep. ad Roman.*, iv. p. 683; *in Matth.*, iii. p. 644; *Homil.* viii. *in Numb.*, ii. p. 294; *Contra Cels.*, i. 63, p. 378; *De Principiis præf.*, i. p. 49. *Opp.*, ed. Delarue.

[4] † 340 A.D.

[5] *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 25; also 31, 39; vi. 13, 14.

books into three classes, containing those writings *generally received*,[1] those *controverted*,[2] and the *heretical*.[3] The first has the four gospels, the Acts, thirteen epistles of Paul, 1 John, 1 Peter, the Apocalypse.[4] The second class is subdivided into two, the first corresponding to Origen's *mixed*[5] or *intermediate* writings, the second to his *spurious*[6] ones. The former subdivision contains the epistles of James, 2 Peter, Jude, 2 and 3 John; the latter, the Acts of Paul, the Shepherd, the Revelation of Peter, the epistle of Barnabas, the Doctrines of the Apostles, the Apocalypse of John, the gospel according to the Hebrews. The third class has the gospels of Peter, of Thomas, the

[1] ὁμολογούμενα, ἐνδιάθηκα, ἀναμφίλεκτα, ἀναντίῤῥητα.

[2] ἀντιλεγόμενα, γνώριμα δὲ τοῖς πολλοῖς, ἐν πλείσταις ἐκκλησίαις δεδημοσιευμένα, νόθα.

[3] ἄτοπα πάντη καὶ δυσσεβῆ; παντελῶς νόθα (iii. 31).

[4] This last with the qualification εἴγε φανείη. In another place he states that it was rejected by some, and therefore it is also along with the ἀντιλεγόμενα or νόθα.

[5] μικτά. [6] νοθα

traditions of Matthias, the Acts of Peter, Andrew, and John. The subdivisions of the second class are indefinite. The only distinction which Eusebius puts between them is that of ecclesiastical use. Though he classes as *spurious* the Acts of Paul, the Shepherd, the Revelation of Peter, the epistle of Barnabas, the doctrines of the Apostles, the Apocalypse of John, the gospel according to the Hebrews, and does not apply the epithet to the epistle of James, the 2 of Peter, 2 and 3 John, he uses of James's in one place the verb *to be counted spurious.*[1] In like manner he speaks of the Apocalypse of Peter and the epistle of Barnabas as *controverted.*[2] The *mixed* or *spurious* of Origen are vaguely separated by Eusebius; both come

[1] *νοθεύομαι. Hist. Eccles.*, ii. 23. Christophorson, Schmid, and Hug think that Eusebius gave the opinion of others in this word; but it is more likely that he gave his own, as Valesius thinks. See the note in Schmid's *Historia antiqua et vindicatio Canonis, &c.*, p. 358.

[2] *Ibid.*, vi. 14.

under the general head of the *controverted;* for after specifying them separately he sums up, "all these will belong to the class of the *controverted,*" the very class already described as containing "books well known and recognized by most," implying also that they were read in the churches.[1]

About 332 A.D. the Emperor Constantine entrusted Eusebius with the commission to make out a complete collection of the sacred Christian writings for the use of the Catholic Church. How this order was executed we are not told. But Credner is probably correct in saying that the code consisted of all that is now in the New Testament except the Revelation. The fifty copies which were made must have supplied Constantinople and the Greek Church for a considerable time with an authoritative canon.

[1] See Weber's *Beiträge zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, p. 142, &c.

Eusebius's catalogue agrees in substance with that of Origen. The historian followed ecclesiastical tradition. He inquired diligently into the prevailing opinions of the Christian churches and writers, with the views held by others before and contemporaneously with himself, but could not attain to a decided result. His hesitation stood in the way of a clear, firm, view of the question. The tradition respecting certain books was still wavering, and he was unable to fix it. Authority fettered his independent judgment. That he was inconsistent and confused does not need to be shown.

The exact principles that guided the formation of a canon in the earliest centuries cannot be discovered. Strictly speaking there were none. Definite grounds for the reception or rejection of books were not apprehended. The choice was determined by various circumstances, of which apostolic origin was the chief, though this itself was insufficiently attested; for if it be

asked whether all the New Testament writings proceeded from the authors whose names they bear, criticism cannot reply in the affirmative. The example and influence of churches to which the writings had been first addressed must have acted upon the reception of books. Above all, individual teachers here and there saw the necessity of meeting heretics with their own weapons, in their own way, with *apostolic records* instead of oral tradition. The circumstances in which the orthodox were placed led to this step, effecting a bond of union whose need must have been felt while each church was isolated under its own bishop and the collective body could not take measures in common. Writings of more recent origin would be received with greater facility than such as had been in circulation for many years, especially if they professed to come from a prominent apostle. A code of apostolic writings, divine and perfect like the Old Testament, had to be presented as soon as

possible against Gnostic and Manichæan heretics whose doctrines were injurious to objective Christianity; while the multiplication of apocryphal works threatened to overwhelm genuine tradition with a heap of superstition. The Petrine and Pauline Christians, now amalgamated to a great extent, agreed in hastening the canon-process.

The infancy of the canon was cradled in an uncritical age, and rocked with traditional ease. Conscientious care was not directed from the first to the well-authenticated testimony of eye-witnesses. Of the three fathers who contributed most to its early growth, Irenæus was credulous and blundering; Tertullian passionate and one-sided; and Clement of Alexandria, imbued with the treasures of Greek wisdom, was mainly occupied with ecclesiastical ethics. Irenæus argues that the gospels should be four in number, neither more nor less, because there are four universal winds and four quarters of

the world. The Word or Architect of all things gave the gospel in a fourfold shape. According to this father, the apostles were fully informed concerning all things, and had a perfect knowledge, after their Lord's ascension. Matthew wrote his gospel while Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome and founding the church.[1] Such assertions shew both ignorance and exaggeration.

Tertullian affirms that the *tradition of the apostolic churches* guarantees the four gospels,[2] and refers his readers to the churches of Corinth, Philippi, Ephesus, &c., for the *authentic epistles* of Paul.[3] What is this but the rhetoric of an enthusiast?

Clement contradicts himself in making Peter authorise Mark's gospel to be read in the churches; while in another place he says that

[1] *Adversus Hæres*, iii., 11, 8.
[2] *Adv. Marc.* iv. 5.
[3] *De præscript. hæret.* c. 36.

the apostle neither "forbad nor encouraged it."[1]

The three fathers of whom we are speaking, had neither the ability nor inclination to examine the genesis of documents surrounded with an apostolic halo. No analysis of their authenticity and genuineness was seriously attempted. In its absence custom, accident, taste, practical needs directed the tendency of tradition. All the rhetoric employed to throw the value of their testimony as far back as possible, even up to or at least very near the apostle John is of the vaguest sort. Appeals to the continuity of tradition and of church doctrine, to the exceptional veneration of these fathers for the gospels, to their opinions being formed earlier than the composition of the works in which they are expressed, possess no force. The ends which the fathers in question had in view, their polemic motives, their un-

[1] *Ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles.* ii. 15 and vi. 14.

critical, inconsistent assertions, their want of
sure data, detract from their testimony. Their
decisions were much more the result of pious
feeling biassed by the theological speculation
of the times, than the conclusions of a sou
judgment. The very arguments they use
establish certain conclusions shew weakness
perception. What are the manifestation
spiritual feeling, compared with the resul
logical reasoning? Are they more tenable
the latter? Certainly not, at least in re
to questions of evidence. It is true tha
testimony has a value; but it is on
portionate to the degree of credibility
ing to witnesses circumstanced as th
Their separation of canonical from un
gospels, or rather their canonising o
writings apart from others, and thei
of inspiration for the authors of t
must be judged by th
wise of the th

of their type. The second century abounded in pseudonymous literature; and the early fathers, as well as the churches, were occupied with other things than the sifting of evidence connected with writings considerably prior to their own time. While the increase of such apocryphal productions, gospels, acts, and apocalypses among the heretical parties stimulated the orthodox bishops and churches to make an authentic collection, it increased the difficulties of the task.

Textual criticism has been employed to discredit the true dates of the present gospels; and the most exaggerated descriptions have been given of the frequent transcription of the text and its great corruption in the second century. The old Latin versions used by Tertullian and the interpreter of Irenæus, have been pressed into the same service. The Curetonian Syriac version of the gospels has been put as early as possible into the second century,

though it can hardly have been prior to the very close of it, or to the beginning of the third. Here the strong assertions of apologetic writers have been freely scattered abroad. But the evidence in favour of the authors traditionally assigned to the gospels and some of the epistles, is still uncertain. A wide gap intervenes between eye-witnesses of the apostles or apostolic men that wrote the sacred books, and the earliest fathers who assert such authorship. The traditional bridge between them is a precarious one. As the chasm cannot be filled by adequate external evidence, we are thrown back on the internal character of the works themselves. One thing appears from the early corruption of the sacred record spoken of by Irenæus, Origen, and others, tha they were not regarded with the necessarily attaching to infallibl Their being freel canonisation.

them had no certain knowledge of their authors. To them, that knowledge had been obscured and lost; though a sagacious criticism might have arrived at the true state of the question even in their day.

When it is asked, to whom do we owe the canon? the usual answer is, to the Church. This is true only in a sense. The unity attributed to christians prior to Irenæus and Tertullian consisted in their religious consciousness. It was subjective. The idea of *the church* was that of inward fellowship—the fellowship of the spirit rather than an outward organism. The preservation of the early Christian writings was owing, in the first instance, to the congregations to whom they were sent, and the neighbouring ones with whom such congregations had friendly connection. The care of them devolved on the most influential teachers,—on those who occupied leading positions in the chief cities, or were most

interested in apostolic writings as a source of instruction. The Christian books were mostly in the hands of the bishops. In process of time the canon was the care of assemblies or councils. But it had been made before the first general council by a few leading fathers towards the end of the second century in different countries. The formation of a Catholic Church and of a canon was simultaneous. The circumstances in which the collection originated were unfavourable to the authenticity of its materials, for tradition had been busy over them and their authors. Instead of attributing the formation of the canon to the Church, it would be more correct to say that the important stage in it was due to three teachers, each working separately and in his own way, who were intent upon the creation of a Christian society which did not appear in the apostolic age,—a visible organisation united in faith,—where the discordant opinions of

apostolic and sub-apostolic times should be finally merged. The canon was not the work of the Christian Church so much as of the men who were striving to form that Church, and could not get beyond the mould received by primitive Christian literature. The first mention of a *Catholic Church* occurs in *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*, an epistle that cannot be dated earlier than 160 A.D., and may perhaps be ten years later. But though the idea be there and in the Ignatian epistles, its established use is due to Irenæus, Tertullian, and Cyprian.

It is necessary to be precise on this subject because some speak of *the church* as though it were contemporary with the apostles themselves, or at least with their immediate disciples; and proceed to argue that dissensions arose soon after "within the church" rendering an appeal to the written word necessary. When the authority of *traditional teaching* gave way to

that of *a written rule*, a change came over the condition of *the church*. Such a view tends to mislead. There were dissensions among the earliest christians. The apostles themselves were by no means unanimous. Important differences of belief divided the Jewish and Gentile christians from the beginning. The types of christian truth existing from the first gradually coalesced about the middle of the second century; when heretics, especially the Gnostics appeared so formidable that a catholic church was developed. Along with this process, and as an important element in it, the writings of apostles and apostolic men were uncritically taken from tradition and elevated to the rank of divine documents. It was not the rise of new dissensions "within the church" which led to the first formation of a christian canon; rather did the new idea of "a catholic church" require a standard of appeal in apostolic writings, which were now invested with an autho-

rity that did not belong to them from the first.

Origen was the first who took a somewhat scientific view of the relative value belonging to the different parts of the biblical collection. His examination of the canon was critical. Before him the leading books had been regarded as divine and sacred, the source of doctrinal and historic truth. From this stand-point he did not depart. With him ecclesiastical tradition was a prevailing principle in the recognition of books belonging of right to the New Testament collection. He was also guided by the inspiration of the authors; a criterion arbitrary in its application, as his own statements show. In his time, however, the collection was being gradually enlarged; his third class, *i.e.*, *the mixed*, approaching reception into the first. But amid all the fluctuations of opinion to which certain portions of the New Testament were subject, and the unscientific procedure

the apocryphal Greek books; but here he includes some of the latter. We also learn from Jerome that Judith was in the number of the books reckoned up by the Nicene Council. Thus the fathers who give catalogues of the Old Testament shew the existence of a Jewish and a Christian canon in relation to the Old Testament; the latter wider than the former; their private opinion more favourable to the one, though the other was historically transmitted. In relation to the New Testament, the synods which drew up lists of the sacred books show the opinion of some leading father like Augustine, along with what custom had sanctioned. In this department no member of the synod exercised his critical faculty; a number together would decide such questions summarily. Bishops proceed in the track of tradition or authority.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BIBLE CANON FROM THE FOURTH CENTURY TO THE REFORMATION.

It will now be convenient to treat of the two Testaments together, *i.e.*, *the canon of the Bible.* The canons of both have been considered separately to the end of the third century; they may be henceforward discussed together. We proceed, therefore, to the Bible-canon of the fourth century, first in the Greek Church and then in the Latin. The Council of Laodicea, at which there was a predominant semiarian influence, forbad the reading of all *non-canonical* books. The 59th canon enacts, that "private psalms must not be read in the Church, nor uncanonized books; but only the canonical ones of the New and Old Testament." The

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CHAPTER VII.

THE BIBLE CANON FROM THE FOURTH CENTURY TO THE REFORMATION.

It will now be convenient to treat of the two Testaments together, *i.e., the canon of the Bible.* The canons of both have been considered separately to the end of the third century; they may be henceforward discussed together. We proceed, therefore, to the Bible canon of the fourth century, first in the Greek Church and then in the Latin. The Council of Laodicea, at which there was a predominant semiarian influence, finished the sifting of all non-canonical books [illegible] canon enacts, that private [illegible] Church, [illegible] canonical [illegible] The

60th canon proceeds to give a list of such. All the books of the Old Testament are enumerated, but in a peculiar order, somewhat like the Septuagint one. With Jeremiah is specified *Baruch*, then the Lamentations and *Epistle*. The prophets are last; first the minor, next the major and Daniel. In the New Testament list are the usual seven Catholic epistles, and fourteen of Paul including that to the Hebrews. The Apocalypse alone is wanting. Credner has proved that this 60th canon is not original. It is of much later date.[1] The Council was held in the year 363 A.D. The Apostolic Constitutions give a kind of canon like that in the 59th of Laodicea. After speaking of the books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Kings, Chronicles, those belonging to the return from the captivity, those of Job, Solomon, the sixteen prophets, and the Psalms of David; our Acts, the epistles of Paul, and the four

[1] *Geschichte des neutest. Kanon*, p. 217, &c.

gospels are mentioned. It is remarkable that the Catholic epistles are not mentioned. That they are indicated under Acts is altogether improbable. The Antiochian Church of that time doubted or denied the apostolicity of these letters, as is seen from Theodore, Cosmas, and others. Hence their absence from these Constitutions, which are a collection belonging to different times; the oldest portion not earlier perhaps than the third century.[1]

Cyril of Jerusalem, who took part in the Council of Laodicea, and died 386 A.D., gives a list "of the divine Scriptures." The books of the Old Testament are twenty-two, and the arrangement is usually that which is in the English Bible. With Jeremiah is associated "Baruch and the Epistle." All the New Testament books are given except the Apocalypse. The list agrees very nearly with that of Eusebius, by taking the latter's "contro-

[1] See *Constit. Apostol.*, p. 67, ed. Ueltzen.

verted" writings into the class of the "generally received."[1] The writer insists on the necessity of unity in the Church upon the subject, and forbids the reading of writings not *generally received.* None but these are allowed. Yet he refers to Baruch (iii. 36-38) as *the prophet;* and in adducing the testimonies of the prophets for the existence of the Holy Spirit, the last is Daniel xiii. 41, 45.

In Athanasius's festal epistle (365 A.D.) the Alexandrian archbishop undertakes "to set forth in order the books that are canonical and handed down and believed to be divine." His list of the Old Testament nearly agrees with Cyril's, except that Esther is omitted and Ruth counted separately, to make out the twenty-two books. He adds, "there are other books not canonical, designed by the fathers to read by those just joining us and wishing to be instructed in the doctrine of piety;" *i.e.*, the

[1] *Catech.*, iv. 22, pp. 66, 67, ed. Milles.

Wisdom of Solomon and the Wisdom of Sirach, and Esther and Judith and Tobit, and the Doctrine of the Apostles so called, and the Shepherd; "those being *canonical*, and these being *read*, let there be no mention of apocryphal writings," &c. The New Testament list is the same as Cyril's, with the addition of the Apocalypse.[1] He quotes several of the apocryphal books in the same way as he does the canonical. Thus he cites Tobit xii. 7, with "as it is written;[2] and Sirach xxx. 4, with "as sacred Scripture somewhere says."[3] Elsewhere he applies to the latter (iii. 33) "divine Spirit says;"[4] and Daniel xiii. 45 is cited under the name of "the Scriptures."[5] Canonical and apocryphal are mentioned together, and similar language applied to them.

Gregory of Nazianzus[6] puts his list into a poetical form. In the Old Testament it agrees

[1] Athanasii *Opp.* ed. Benedict. i. 2, pp. 962, 963.
[2] ii. 1, p. 305. [3] i. 1, p. 183. [4] ii. p. 283.
[5] ii. p. 9. [6] † 389 A.D.

with Athanasius's exactly, only he mentions none but the canonical books; in the New, he leaves out the Apocalypse, and so deviates from Athanasius.[1]

Amphilochius of Iconium[2] gives a long catalogue of the Biblical books in verse. The canon of the old Testament is the usual one, except that he says of Esther at the end, "some judge that Esther should be added to the foregoing." He notices none of the apocryphal books. His New Testament canon agrees with the present, only he excludes the Apocalypse as *spurious*; which is given as the judgment of the majority. He alludes to the doubts that existed as to the epistle to the Hebrews, and to the number of the catholic epistles (seven or three).[3] The concluding words show that no list was universally received at that time.

[1] Gregorii Nazianzeni, *Opp.* ed. Migne, vol. iii. pp. 473, 474.
[2] † 395 A.D.
[3] Iambi ad Seleucum; in Greg. Naz. *Opp.* ii. p. 194.

Epiphanius[1] follows Athanasius in his canon. As to the number of the Old Testament books, he hesitates between twenty-two and twenty-seven; but the contents are the same. At the end of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, Wisdom and Sirach are mentioned as "divine writings;" elsewhere they are characterized as "doubtful."[2] His practice shows his sentiments clearly enough, when he refers to the Book of Wisdom in such phrases as "Scripture," as "Solomon the most blessed of the prophets says;"[3] and cites Sirach (vii. 1) as well as Baruch as "Scripture."[4] He mentions the fact that the epistles of Clement of Rome were read in the churches.[5]

[1] † 403 A. D.

[2] ἀμφιλέκτα. *Adv. Hæres*, i. p. 19. See *Hæres*, iii. tom. i. p. 941. De ponder. et mensur. 23.

[3] Tom. i. pp. 573, 607, 713 ed. Petav.

[4] Pp. 481, 755.

[5] *Hæres*, xxx. 15.

canonical when a well-attested tradition put it among those composed by inspired men, apostles or others; and it had on that account a determining authority in matters of faith. Books which served as a rule of faith and were definitively set forth by the Church as divinely authoritative, were now termed *canonical.* The canon consisted of writings settled or determined by ecclesiastical law.[1] Such was the idea added to the original acceptation of canon. To canonical were opposed apocryphal writings, *i.e.*, *heretical* and *fabricated* ones; while an intermediate class consisted of those read in the churches, which were useful, but not decisive in matters of belief. Another advance in the matter of the canon at this period was the general adoption of the Hebrew canon, with a relegation of the Greek additions in the Septuagint to the class *publicly read.*[2] Yet doubts

[1] βιβλία κανονιζόμενα, κανονικά, κεκανονισμένα, ὡρισμένα.

[2] βιβλία ἀναγινωσκόμενα.

about the reception of Esther into the number of the canonical books were still entertained, though it was one of the Jewish canon; doubtless on account of its want of harmony with Christian consciousness. And the catholic epistles which had been doubted before, Jude, James, Second Peter, were now generally received. But there was a division of opinion about the Apocalypse.

We come to the period of the Latin corresponding to that of the Greek Church which has just been noticed. Augustine[1] gave great attention to the subject, labouring to establish a complete canon, the necessity of which was generally felt. According to him the Scriptures which were received and acknowledged by all the churches of the day should be canonical. Of those not universally adopted, such as are received by the majority and the weightier of the churches, should be preferred to those

[1] †430 A.D.

canonical when a well-attested tradition put it among those composed by inspired men, apostles or others; and it had on that account a determining authority in matters of faith. Books which served as a rule of faith and were definitively set forth by the Church as divinely authoritative, were now termed *canonical*. The canon consisted of writings settled or determined by ecclesiastical law.[1] Such was the idea adde to the original acceptation of canon. T canonical were opposed apocryphal writing *i.e.*, *heretical* and *fabricated* ones; while intermediate class consisted of those read the churches, which were useful, but not cisive in matters of belief. Another advanc the matter of the canon at this period was general adoption of the Hebrew canon relegation of the Greek additions gint to the class *publi*

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received by the fewer and less important churches.[1] In his enumeration of the forty-four books of the Old Testament, he gives, after Chronicles, other histories "which are neither connected with the order" specified in the preceding context, "nor with one another" *i.e.*, Job, Tobit, Esther, Judith, the two books of the Maccabees, and Esdras. Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, he thinks, should be numbered among the prophets, as deserving of authority and having a certain likeness to Solomon's writings. He says of the Maccabees that this "Scripture has been received by the Church not uselessly, if it be read or heard soberly."[2] The famous passage in the treatise on Christian doctrine, where Augustine enumerates the whole canon, is qualified by no other; for though he knew the distinction between the canonical books of the Palestinian Jews and the so-called

[1] *De Doctrina Christiana*. ii. 8.

[2] *Contra Gaudent*. i. 38; *Opp*. Paris, 1837, vol. ix. p. 1006.

apocryphal ones, as well as the fact of some New Testament writings not being received universally, he thought *church-reception* a sufficient warrant for canonical authority. Hence he considered the books of the Maccabees canonical, because so received by the Church; while he says of Wisdom and Sirach that they merited *authoritative* reception and numbering among the *prophetic* Scriptures. He raises, not lowers, the authority of the so-called apocryphal books which he mentions. He enumerates all the New Testament books, specifying the Pauline epistles as fourteen, and so reckoning that to the Hebrews as the apostle's; but he speaks of it elsewhere as an epistle about which some were uncertain, professing that he was influenced to admit it as canonical by the authority of the Oriental churches.[1] He speaks hesitatingly in various places about its Pauline authorship.

[1] *De peccat. merit.* i. 50; *Opp.* vol. x. p. 137, ed. Migne.

In 393 the African bishops held a council at Hippo where the canon was discussed. The list of the canonical Scriptures given includes, besides the Palestinian one, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, and the two books of Maccabees. The New Testament canon seems to have agreed exactly with our present one.[1] The Council of Carthage (397) repeated the statute of its predecessor, enumerating the same books of the Bible as canonical.[2] Augustine was the animating spirit of both councils, so that they may be taken as expressing his views on the subject.

Jerome[3] gives a list of the twenty-two canonical books of the Old Testament, the same as that of the Palestinian Jews, remarking that some put Ruth and Lamentations among the Hagiographa, so making twenty-four books. All besides should be put among the Apoc-

[1] *Mansi*, tom. iii. p. 924.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 891.

[3] †420 A.D.

rypha. Wisdom, Sirach, Judith, Tobit, the Shepherd are not in the canon. The two books of Maccabees he regarded in the same light.[1] But though Jerome's words imply the apocryphal position of these extra-canonical books, he allows of their being read in public for the edification of the people, not to confirm the authority of doctrines; *i.e.*, they belong to "the ecclesiastical books" of Athanasius. His idea of "apocryphal" is wider and milder than that of some others in the Latin Church. It has been conjectured by Welte,[2] that the conclusions of the African councils in 393 and 397 influenced Jerome's views of the canon, so that his later writings allude to the apocryphal works in a more favourable manner than that of the *Prologus galeatus* or the preface to Solomon's books. One thing is clear, that he quotes different passages from the Apocrypha

[1] *Prologus galeatus in Libros Regum. Epist. ad Paulinum.*
[2] In Herbst's *Einleit., erster Theil*, p. 37.

along with others from the Hebrew canon. In his letter to Eustochium, Sirach iii. 33 (Latin) comes | between citations from Matthew and Luke ; and is introduced by *which is written* in a letter to Pammachius ; and xxii. 6 has *divine Scripture* applied to it.[1] Ruth, Esther, and Judith are spoken of as *holy volumes.* The practice of Jerome differed from his theory ; or rather he became less positive, and altered his views somewhat with the progress of time and knowledge. As to the New Testament, he gives a catalogue of all that now belong to it, remarking of the epistle to the Hebrews and of the Apocalypse that he adopts both on the authority of ancient writers, not of present custom. His opinion about them was not decided.[2] In another work he gives the Epistle of Barnabas at the end of the canonical list. He also states the doubts of many respecting

[1] *Opp.* ed. Benedict., Vol. IV., pp. 679, 584, 750.
[2] Ep. ad Dardan. *Opp.* vol. i. p. 1103, ed. Migne.

the Epistle to Philemon, and about 2 Peter, Jude, 2 and 3 John. According to him the first Epistle of Clement of Rome was publicly read in some churches.[1]

Hilary of Poitiers[2] seems to have followed Origen's catalogue. He gives twenty-two books, specifying "the epistle" of Jeremiah; and remarks that some added Tobit and Judith, making twenty-four, after the letters of the Greek alphabet. He cites Wisdom and Sirach as "prophets."[3] In the New Testament he never quotes James, Jude, 2 and 3 John, nor 2 Peter.

Rufinus[4] enumerates the books of the Old and New Testaments which "are believed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit itself, according to the tradition of our ancestors, and have been

[1] See *Onomastica Sacra;* Comment. in Ep. ad Philem; De Viris illustr.

[2] †368 A.D.

[3] Prolog. in Psalm., *Opp.* ed. Migne, vol. i. p. 241.

[4] †410 A.D.

handed down by the Churches of Christ." All the books of the Hebrew canon and of the New Testament are specified. After the list he says, "these are they which the fathers included in the canon, by which they wished to establish the assertion of our faith." He adds that there are other books not *canonical*, but *ecclesiastical* —the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, Tobit, Judith, and the books of the Maccabees. Besides the usual New Testament works, he speaks of the Shepherd of Hermas, and the "Judgment of Peter" as read in the churches, but not as authoritative in matters of faith.[1]

Philastrius[2] gives some account of the Scriptures and their contents in his time. The canonical Scriptures, which alone should be read in the Catholic Church, are said to be the law and the prophets, the gospels, Acts, thirteen epistles of Paul, and seven others. He speaks

[1] *Expos. in Symbol. Apostol.*, pp. 373, 374, ed. Migne.
[2] †About 387 A.D.

of *heretics* who reject John's gospel and the Apocalypse; remarking also that some do not read the Epistle to the Hebrews, not thinking it to be Paul's.[1] The influence of the East upon the West appears in the statements of this father upon the subject. He had several canonical lists before him; one at least from an Oriental-Arian source, which explains some assertions in his book.

Innocent I. of Rome wrote to Exsuperius (405 A.D.), bishop of Toulouse, giving a list of the canonical books. Besides the Hebrew canon, he has Wisdom and Sirach; Tobit, Judith, the two Maccabees. The New Testament list is identical with the present. He also refers to pseudepigraphical writings which ought not only to be rejected but condemned.[2]

A canonical list appears in three different forms bearing the names of Damasus (366-384),

[1] De Hæres. chs. 60 and 61, in Gallandi, vii. pp. 424, 425.
[2] Apud Mansi, iii. pp. 1040, 1041.

Gelasius I. (492-496), and Hormisdas (514-523). According to the first, the books of the Old Testament are arranged in three orders. In the first are the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, four Kings, two Chronicles, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus; in the second, all the prophets, including Baruch; in the third, Job, Tobit, Judith, Esther, Esdras, two Maccabees. The New Testament books are the four gospels, fourteen epistles of Paul, the Apocalypse, and Acts, with seven Catholic epistles.

That which is called the Decree of Gelasius is almost identical with the preceding. It wants Baruch and Lamentations. It has also two Esdrases instead of one. In the New Tesment the epistle to the Hebrews is absent.

The Hormisdas-form has the Lamentations of Jeremiah: and in the New Testament the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The MSS. of these lists present some diver-

sity; and Credner supposes the Damasus-list a fiction. But Thiel has vindicated its authenticity. It is possible that some interpolations may exist in the last two; the first, which is the shortest, may well belong to the time of Damasus.[1]

In 419 A.D. another council at Carthage, at which Augustine was present, repeated the former list of books with a single alteration, viz., fourteen epistles of Paul (instead of (thirteen).[2]

The preceding notices and catalogues show a general desire in the Western Church to settle the canon. The two most influential men of the period were Augustine and Jerome, who did not entirely agree. Both were unfitted for the critical examination of such a topic. The former was a gifted spiritual man, lacking

[1] Credner's *Zur Geschichte des Kanons*, p. 151, &c., and Thiel's *Epistolæ Romanorum Pontificum genuinae*, tom. i.

[2] Mansi, iv. p. 430.

learning and independence. Tradition dominated all his ideas about the difficult or disputed books; a tradition arbitrarily assumed. He did not enter upon the question scientifically, on the basis of certain principles; but was content to take refuge in authority—the prevailing authority of leading churches. His judgment was weak, his sagacity moderate, and the absence of many-sidedness hindered a critical result. Jerome, again, was learned but timid, lacking the courage to face the question fairly or fundamentally, and the independence necessary to its right investigation. Belonging as he did to both churches, he recommended the practice of the one to the other. He, too, was chiefly influenced by tradition; by Jewish teachers in respect to the Old Testament, and by general custom as to the New. The question was not susceptible of advancement under such manipulation, and could not be settled on a legitimate basis. Compared with the eastern

Church, the western accepted a wider canon of the Old Testament, taking some books into the class of the *canonical* which the former put among those *to be read.* In regard to the New Testament, *all* the Catholic epistles and even the Apocalypse were received. The African churches and councils generally adopted this larger canon, which resulted from the fact of the old Latin versions of the Bible current in Africa being daughters of the Septuagint. If the Latins apparently looked upon the Greek as the original itself, the apocryphal books would soon get rank with the canonical. Yet the more learned fathers, Jerome, Rufinus, and others, favoured the Hebrew canon in distinguishing between *canonical* and *ecclesiastical* books. The influence of the Eastern upon the Western Church is still visible, though it could not extinguish the prevailing desire to include the disputed books. The Greek view was to receive nothing which had not apparently a

good attestation of divine origin and apostolic authority; the Latin was to exclude nothing hallowed by descent and proved by custom. The former Church looked more to the sources of doctrine; the latter to those of edification. The one desired to contract those sources, so as not to be too rich; the other to enlarge the springs of edification, not to be too poor. Neither had the proper resources for the work, nor a right perception of the way in which it should be set about; and therefore they were not fortunate in their conclusions, differing as they did in regard to points which affect the foundation of a satisfactory solution.

Notwithstanding the numerous endeavours both in the East and West to settle the canon during the 4th and 5th centuries, it was not finally closed. The doubts of individuals were still expressed, and succeeding ages testify to the want of universal agreement respecting several books. The question, however, was

practically determined. No material change occurred again in the absolute rejection or admission of books. With some fluctuations, the canon remained very much as it was in the 4th and 5th centuries. Tradition shaped and established its condition. General usage gave it a permanency which it was not easy to disturb. Definite principles did not guide the course of its formation, nor did they fix it in its present state. It was dominated first and last by circumstances and ideas which philosophy did not actuate. The history is mainly an objective one. Uncritical at its commencement, it was equally so in the two centuries which have just been considered.

The history of the canon in the Syrian church cannot be traced with much exactness. The Peshito version had only the Hebrew canonical books at first; the apocryphal were added afterwards. In the New Testament it wanted four of the catholic epistles and the

Apocalypse. Ephrem (A.D. 378) uses all the books in our canon, the apocryphal as well as the canonical. The former are cited by him in the same way as the latter. Sirach ii. 1 is quoted with *as the Scripture says*;[1] and Wisdom iv. 7 with *it is written*.[2] Daniel xiii. 9, belonging to the Greek additions, is also cited with *as it is written*.[3] It should be observed that the quotations given are all from Ephrem's Greek works, not the Syriac ones; and that suspicions have been raised about the former being tampered with. The Syrian version made by Polycarp at the request of Philoxenus of Mabug, had the four catholic epistles wanting in the Peshito; and the Charklean recension of it probably had the Apocalypse also, if that which was published by de Dieu at Leyden belongs to it. Junilius, (though an African bishop about 550 A.D.), says that he got his know-

[1] *Opp. Græc.*, tom. ii. p. 327, ed. Rom. 1746.
[2] *Ibid.*, tom. i. p. 101 [3] Tom. iii. p. 60.

ledge from a Persian of the name of Paulus who received his education in the school of Nisibis. He may, therefore, be considered a witness of the opinions of the Syrian church at the beginning of the 6th century. Dividing the biblical books into those of *perfect*, those of *intermediate*, and those of *no authority*, he makes the first the canonical; the second, those added to them by many (plures); the third, all the rest. In the first list he puts Ecclesiasticus. Among the second he puts 1 and 2 Chronicles, Job, Ezra and Nehemiah, Judith, Esther, 1 and 2 Maccabees; and in the New Testament, James, 2 Peter, Jude, 2 and 3 John. He also says that the Apocalypse of John is much doubted by the Orientals. In the third list, *i.e.*, books of no authority added by some (quidam) to the canonical, are put Wisdom and Canticles.[1] The catalogue is confused, and erroneous at

[1] Gallandi, xii. p. 79, &c.

least in one respect, that Jerome is referred to, as sanctioning the division given by the Old Testament books; for neither he nor the Jews agree with it.

The canon of the old Abyssinian church seems to have had all the books in the Septuagint, canonical and apocryphal, together, little distinction being made between them. That of the New Testament agrees with the present Greek one. At a later period a list was made and constituted the legal one for the use of the church, having been derived from the Jacobite canons of the apostles. This gives, in the Old Testament, the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Judith, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, Esther, Tobit, two books of Maccabees, Job, Psalms, five books of Solomon, minor and greater prophets. The Wisdom of Sirach (for teaching children) and the book of Joseph ben Gorion, *i.e.*, that of the Maccabees, are external. The new Testament

has four gospels, Acts, seven apostolic epistles, fourteen of Paul, and the Revelation of John. Later catalogues vary much, and are often enlarged with the book of Enoch, 4 Esdras, the Apocalypse of Isaiah, &c. The canon of the Ethiopic church was fluctuating.[1]

The Armenian canon, if we may judge from printed editions, follows the Septuagint; but the books are put in a peculiar position. The three books of Maccabees follow the historical ones. In the New Testament the epistle to the Hebrews precedes those to Timothy and Titus; while Sirach, a second recension of Daniel, Manasseh, 3 Corinthians, with the account of John's death, are relegated to an appendix.

The Bible canon of the Eastern church in the middle ages shows no real advance. Endeavours were made to remove the uncertainty arising from the existence of numerous lists;

[1] See Dillmann in Ewald's *Jahrbücher*, v. p. 144, &c.

but former decisions and decrees of councils were repeated instead of a new, independent canon. Here belong the catalogue in the Alexandrian MS., of the fifth century, which is peculiar. After the prophets come Esther, Tobit, Judith, Ezra and Nehemiah, 4 Maccabees, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, the all-virtuous Wisdom, the Wisdom of Jesus of Sirach. In the New Testament, the Apocalypse is followed by two epistles of Clement. The list was probably made in Egypt. That of Anastasius Sinaita[1] needs no remarks. The apostolic canons (canon 76) give a list both of the Old and New Testament books, in which the usual canonical ones are supplemented by Judith, 3 Maccabees; and in the New Testament by two epistles of Clement, and the Clementines in eight books. The Apocalypse is wanting. But the whole is a patchwork, borrowed from the Apostolic

[1] † 599 A.D.

Constitutions, Athanasius's festal epistle, and other sources. It cannot be put earlier than the fifth century; and it is pretty certain that Judith and Maccabees are later insertions.[1] We have also Nicephorus's *Stichometry* (806-815;)[2] and Cosmas Indicopleustes (535), who never mentions the seven Catholic epistles of the New Testament or the Apocalypse; the Council of Constantinople commonly called the the *Trullan* (692); John of Damascus[3] the second Nicene council (787); the Synopsis divinæ Scripturæ Vet. et Novi Test. (about 1000); Zonaras (about 1120); Alexius Aristenus (about 1160); and Nicephorus Callistus (1330).

In the Western church of the Middle Ages, diversity of opinion respecting certain books continued. Though the views of Augustine

[1] See Credner, *Geschichte des neutest. Kanon*, pp. 235, 236.
[2] See Credner's *Zur. Gesch. des Kanons*, p. 97, &c.
[3] †754 A.D.

were generally followed, the stricter ones of Jerome found many adherents. The canon was fluctuating, and the practice of the churches in regard to it somewhat lax. Here belong Cassiodorus (about 550); the list in the Codex Amiatinus (about 550); Isidore of Seville[1] who, after enumerating three classes of Old Testament books gives a fourth not in the Hebrew canon. Here he specifies Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, saying that the church of Christ puts them among the divine books, honours and highly esteems them.[2] There are also the fourth council of Toledo (632); Gregory the Great;[3] Notker Labeo;[4] Ivo (about 1092); Bede;[5] Alcuin;[6] Rabanus Maurus;[7] Hugo de St Victor;[8] Peter of Clugny;[9] John of Salisbury;[10] Thomas

[1] †636 A.D. [2] *Etymolog.* vi. 1. [3] †604 A.D.
[4] †912 A.D. [5] †735 A.D. [6] †804 A.D.
[7] †856 A.D. [8] †1141 A.D. [9] †1156 A.D.
[10] †1182 A.D.

Aquinas;[1] Hugo de St Caro;[2] Wycliffe;[3] Nicolaus of Lyra,[4] &c., &c. Several of these, as Hugo de St Victor, John of Salisbury, Hugo de St Caro, and Nicolaus of Lyra, followed Jerome in separating the canonical and apocryphal books of the Old Testament.[5]

As to the arrangement of the New Testament books, the gospels stand thus in several MSS. of the old Latin version, in *a*, *b*, *c*, *f*, *ff*, *q*, cod. *D* (Latin); Matthew, John, Luke, Mark. In the Acts of the council at Ephesus (431 A.D.), Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret, and several Latin translations, they are, Matthew, John, Mark, Luke. The Curetonian Syriac has Matthew, Mark, John, Luke; while a very old fragment of the gospels in Turin has Mark and Matthew, &c.

The oldest order of the books, and that which lies at the basis of the current one, is given by

[1] 1270 A.D. [2] †1263 A.D. [3] †1384 A.D.
[4] †1340 A.D. [5] See Hody, p. 648, &c.

Tertullian, viz., gospels, acts, Pauline epistles, Apocalypse, Epistle of John. It was varied by putting the Catholic epistles before the Apocalypse, as in the Muratorian fragment. This order became the prevailing one in the West; with a few variations here and there, such as the placing of the Acts *after* the Pauline epistles by the Peshito, Jerome, and Epiphanius; or after the Catholic epistles, immediately before the Apocalypse by Augustine and the Spanish church; while in the Stichometry of the Clermont MS. they follow the Apocalypse as the last canonical book.

In the ancient Greek church the order was different. There the usual one was gospels, acts, the Catholic epistles, the Pauline, and the Apocalypse. This exists in Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius, and the MSS. B. and A. But the Sinaitic has gospels, Pauline epistles, acts, Catholic epistles, Apocalypse.

The Pauline epistles seem to have been ar-

ranged according to their length. The Catholic ones have that of James first, because the author was bishop of the church at Jerusalem, then the epistles of Peter, the chief of the apostles.[1]

The Reformers generally returned to the Hebrew canon, dividing off the additional books of the Septuagint or those attached to the Vulgate. These they called *apocryphal*, after Jerome's example. Though considered of no authority in matters of doctrine, they were pronounced useful and edifying. The principal reason that weighed with the Reformers was, that Christ and the apostles testified to none of the Septuagint additions.

Besides the canonical books of the Old Testament, Luther translated Judith, Wisdom, Tobit, Sirach, Baruch, 1 and 2 Maccabees, the Greek additions to Esther and Daniel, with the Prayer of Manasseh. His judgment respecting several of these is expressed in the prefaces to

[1] See Credner's *Geschichte*, p. 393, *et. seq.*

them. With regard to 1 Maccabees he thinks it almost equal to the other books of Holy Scripture, and not unworthy to be reckoned among them. Of Wisdom, he says, he was long in doubt whether it should be numbered among the canonical books; and of Sirach that it is a right good book proceeding from a wise man. But he speaks unfavourably of several other apocryphal productions, as of Baruch and 2 Maccabees. It is evident, however, that he considered all he translated of *some* use to the Christian Church. He thought that the book of Esther should not belong to the canon.

Luther's judgment respecting some of the New Testament books was freer than most Protestants now are disposed to approve. He thought the epistle to the Hebrews was neither Paul's nor an apostle's, but proceeded from an excellent and learned man who may have been the disciple of apostles. He did not put it on an equality with the epistles written by apostles

themselves. The Apocalypse he considered neither apostolic nor prophetic, but put it almost on the same level with the 4th book of Esdras, which he spoke elsewhere of tossing into the Elbe. This judgment was afterwards modified, not retracted. James's epistle he pronounced unapostolic, "a right strawy epistle." In like manner, he did not believe that Jude's epistle proceeded from an apostle. Considering it to have been taken from 2 Peter, and not well extracted either, he put it lower than the supposed original. The Reformer, as also his successors, made a distinction between the books of the New Testament similar to that of the Old; the *generally received* (homologoumena) and *controverted* books (antilegomena); but the Calvinists afterwards obliterated it, as the Roman Catholics at the Council of Trent did with the old Testament.[1] The epistle to the

[1] Chemnitz calls seven books of the New Testament *apocryphos*, because of their uncertain authorship (see *Examen. Concilii Tridentini*, p. 45, &c.)

Hebrews, those of Jude and James, with the Apocalypse, belong to the latter class. The distinction in question proceeded from genuine critical tact on the part of the early Lutheran Church, which had canonical and deutero-canonical writings even in the New Testament collection. Nor did the Reformers consider it a dangerous thing to bring the fact before the people. To make it palpable, Luther attached continuous numbers to the first twenty-three books of his version, bringing the four antilegomena after these, without numbers; and this mode of marking the difference continued till the middle of the 17th century.[1] Luther was right in assigning a greater or less value to the separate writings of the New Testament, and left every one to do the same. He relied on their internal value more than tradition; taking the *word of God* in a deeper and

[1] See Tholuck's *Kommentar zum Briefe an die Hebräer, zweite Auflage*, pp. 55, 86.

wider sense than its coincidence with the Bible.

Bodenstein of Carlstad examined the question of canonicity more thoroughly than any of his contemporaries, and followed out the principle of private judgment in regard to it. He divides the biblical books into three classes—1. Books of the highest dignity, viz., the Pentateuch and the Gospels; 2. Books of the second dignity. *i.e.*, the works termed prophetic by the Jews, and the fifteen epistles universally received; 3. Books of the third and lowest authority, *i.e.*, the Jewish Hagiographa and the seven Antilegomena epistles of the New Testament. Among the Apocrypha he makes two classes—such as are out of the canon to the Hebrews yet hagiographical (Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, Tobit, the two Maccabees), and those that are clearly apocryphal and to be rejected (third and fourth Esdras, Baruch, Prayer of Manasseh, a good part of the third chapter

of Daniel, and the last two chapters of Daniel.[1]

Zwingli asserts that the Apocalypse is not a biblical book.[2]

Oecolampadius says—"We do not despise Judith, Tobit, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the last two Esdras, the three Maccabees, the last two chapters of Daniel, but we do not attribute to them divine authority with those others."[3] As to the books of the New Testament he would not compare the Apocalypse, James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John with the rest.[4]

Calvin did not think Paul to be the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, nor 2 Peter to have been written by Peter, but both in his opinion are canonical.

[1] Carlstadt's treatise is reprinted in Credner's *Zur Geschichte des Kanons*.

[2] *Werke*, edited by Schuler and Schulthess, vol. ii. p. 169.

[3] *Ep. ad. Valdenses* 1530, *apud Sculteti annal. evang.*, pp. 313, 314.

[4] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CANON IN THE CONFESSIONS OF DIFFERENT CHURCHES.

THE later Helvetic Confession speaks of the Apocryphal books as read in the churches, but not used as authoritative in matters of faith.[1]

The Gallic Confession makes a distinction between canonical and other books, the former being the rule and norm of faith, not only by the consent of the Church, but much more by the testimony and intrinsic persuasion of the Spirit, by whose suggestions we are taught to distinguish them from other ecclesiastical books which, though useful, are not of the kind that any article of faith can be constituted by them.[2]

The Belgic Confession makes a distinction

[1] Niemeyer, *Collectio Confessionum*, p. 468.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 330.

between the sacred and apocryphal books. The former may be read by the Church, but no doctrine can be derived from them. In the list of New Testament books given there are *fourteen* epistles of Paul.[1]

The Waldensian canon, in which the canonical are carefully separated from the apocryphal books, is not of the date 1120, but is a later document derived from or made by a Protestant after 1532. It is not genuine.

The canon of the Anglican Church (1562), given in the sixth article of religion, defines holy Scripture to be "those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church." After giving the names and number of the canonical books, the article prefaces the apocryphal ones with, "And the other books (as Hierome saith) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not

[1] Niemeyer's *Collectio Confessionum*, pp. 361, 362.

apply them to establish any doctrine. Such are these following," &c., &c. At the end it is stated that "all the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account them canonical." The article is ambiguous. If the canonical books enumerated are those meant in the phrase "of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church," the statement is incorrect. If a distinction is implied between the canonical books and such canonical ones as have never been doubted in the Church, the meaning is obscure. In either case the language is not explicit.

The Scottish or Westminster Confession of Faith gives a list of all the books of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God written; adding that those called the Apocrypha are not of divine inspiration, and no part of the canon,—of no authority in the Church, nor to be approved or made use of otherwise than human writings.

The Roman Catholic canon was finally determined at the Council of Trent (1546), which adopted all the books in the Vulgate as sacred and canonical without distinction. But 3 and 4 Esdras, 3 Maccabees, and the prayer of Manasseh were not included; though the first and last appeared in the original Clementine edition of 1592, not however in the preceding one of Sixtus (1590). A council at Florence in 1441 had set the example which was followed at Trent. But this stringent decree did not prevent individual Catholics from making a distinction between the books, in assuming a first and second canon, or proto-canonical and deutero-canonical books; as did Sixtus Senensis, B. Lamy, Anton a matre Dei, Jahn, and others; though it is hardly consistent with orthodox Catholicism or the view of those who passed the decree. When the writings are said to be of different authority—some more, others less—the intent of the council is violated.

The Vatican council (1870) confirmed the Tridentine decree respecting the canon.

The Greek Church, after several ineffectual attempts to uphold the old distinction between the canonical and ecclesiastical books by Metrophanes Critopulus patriarch of Alexandria in 1625, and Cyril Lucaris patriarch of Constantinople (1638 A.D.),[1] came to the same decision with the Romish, and canonized all the Apocrypha. This was done at a Jerusalem synod under Dositheus in 1672.

[1] Kimmel's *Monumenta fidei eccles. orient*, part i. p. 467.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CANON FROM SEMLER TO THE PRESENT TIME, WITH REFLECTIONS ON ITS READJUSTMENT.

SEMLER[1] was the first scholar after the Reformation who undertook to correct the prevailing ideas respecting the canon. He had no definite principles to guide him, but judged books chiefly by their Christian value and use to the Church. Though his views are sometimes one-sided, and his essays ill-digested, he placed the subject in new lights, and rendered a service to truth which bore abundant fruit in after years.[2] He dealt tradition severe blows, and freed theology from the yoke of the letter. He was

[1] †1791 A D.

[2] *Abhandlung von freier Untersuchung des Canon*, 4 parts, Halle, 1771-1775.

followed by his disciple Corrodi, by G. L. Oeder, J. D. Michaelis, Herder, Lessing, and Eichhorn, —most of whom recommended their views by a freshness of style which Semler did not command. The more recent works of Gesenius, De Wette, Zunz, Ewald, and Hitzig have contributed to form a juster opinion of the true position which the books of the Bible occupy.

In the New Testament, the writings of F. C. Baur and his disciples have opened up a new method of investigating the canon, which promises important and lasting results. By it the early history of Christianity is closely connected with the books in a way that commends itself not only to the impartial but to the traditional inquirer. The head of the Tübingen school, it is true, has carried out the antagonism between Petrines and Paulines too rigorously, and unduly invaded the authenticity of sacred writings; for it is hazardous to make a theory

extremely stringent to the comparative neglect of modifying circumstances, which, though increasing the difficulty of criticism, contribute to the security of its processes. Yet Baur has properly emphasized internal evidence; and many of his conclusions about the authenticity of books will stand. He has thrown much light on the original relations of parties immediately after the origin of Christianity, and disturbed an organic unity of the New Testament which was merely *assumed*. The best introductions to the New Testament must accept them to some extent. The chief characteristic of the school is the application of historic criticism to the genesis of the New Testament writings, irrespective of tradition—a striving to discover the circumstances or tendencies in which the books originated.

The question of the canon is not settled. No prior age could decide it adequately. It is probably the work of successive enquirers to

set it on a right basis, and adjust the various parts in a manner consistent with historic criticism, sound reason, and religion. The absolute and relative worth of books; the degrees in which they regulate ethics and conduct; their varying values at the times of their first appearance and our own; their places in the general history of human progress must be determined before the documents of Judaism and Christianity be classified aright. Their present arrangement is external. Based on no interior principle, it furnishes little help toward a thorough investigation of the whole. Those who look upon the question as historical and literary take a one-sided view. It has a theological character also. It needs the application, not only of historic criticism, but the immediate consciousness belonging to every Christian. The two Testaments should be separated, and their respective positions assigned to each—the Old having been

preparatory to the New. Should it be said bluntly, as it is in the 7th Article of the Anglican Church, that the Old is not contrary to the New Testament? Luther at least expressed his opinion of the difference between them pretty clearly; though the theologians of Germany after him evinced a desire to minimise the difference. Should the general opinion of the Protestant Church that the authority of the Old Testament is not subordinate to that of the New be rigidly upheld? According to one aspect of the former it may be so, viz., its prophetic and theological aspect, that in which it is brought into close union with the latter; the essence of the one being foreshadowed or implied in the other, as Justin Martyr supposed. According to another aspect, viz., the moral and historical, the equality can scarcely be allowed. After the two Testaments have been rightly estimated according to their respective merits, the contents of each should be duly

apportioned—internal evidence being the test of their relative importance, irrespective of *a priori* assumptions. Their traditional origin and authority must be subordinated to the inherent value they bear, or the conformity of the ideas to the will of God. The gradual formation of both canons suggests an analysis of the classes into which they came to be put; for the same canonical dignity was not attributed by the Jews to the books contained in the three divisions; and the controverted writings of the New Testament found gradual recognition very slowly. Luther made important distinctions between the canonical books; and Carlstadt put the Antilegomena of the New Testament on a par with the Hagiographa of the Old.

What is wanted is a rational historic criticism to moderate the theological hypotheses with which the older Protestants set out, such as the supernatural inspiration of the books, their

internal inseparability, and their direct reference to the work of salvation. It must be seen that many points are independent of dogmatics; and that the right decision in things historical may be reached apart from any ecclesiastical standpoint.

Again, should the distinction between the apocryphal and canonical books of the Old Testament be emphasized as it is by many? Should a sharp line be put between the two, as though the one class, with the period it belonged to, were characterized by the errors and anachronisms of its history; the other by simplicity and accuracy; the one, by books written under fictitious names; the other, by the power to distinguish truth from falsehood or by honesty of purpose? Should the one be a sign of the want of truthfulness and discernment; the other, of religious simplicity? Can this lumping of the Apocrypha over against the Hagiographa, serve the purpose

of a just estimate? Hardly so; for some of the latter, such as Esther and Ecclesiastes, cannot be put above Wisdom, 1st Maccabees, Judith, Baruch, or Ecclesiasticus. In the attributes claimed for canonical works alone, no rigid line can be drawn between the two first mentioned and the others. It may be that the inspiration of their authors differed in degree; that the writer of Ecclesiastes, for example, was more philosophical than Jesus son of Sirach; but different degrees of inspiration belong to the canonical writers themselves. Undue exaltation of the Hebrew canon does injustice to the wider Alexandrian one. Yet some still speak of "the pure Hebrew canon," which they identify with that of the Church of England. It is the *Talmudic* canon which is generally adopted at the present day. It was not, however, universally received even by the Jews; for Esther was omitted out of it by those from whom Melito got his catalogue

in Palestine; while Sirach was in it as late as the beginning of the 4th century. Baruch was also added in several Jewish circles, doubtless on account of its supposed authorship. Thus "the pure Hebrew canon" was not one and the same among all Jews; and therefore the phrase is misleading. Neither is it correct to say that is the only canon distinctly recognized during the first four centuries, unless the usage of the early fathers be set over against their *assumed* contrary judgment; nor can all who followed the Alexandrian canon be pronounced uncritical, including Origen himself. A stereotyped canon of the Old Testament, either among Jews or Christians of the first four centuries, which excluded all the apocryphal books and included all the canonical ones, cannot be shown. And in regard to "the critical judgment" of Jews and Christians in that period it is arbitrary to suppose that such as adopted the present canonical books alone were more

discerning than others. They were more traditional and conservative; but their discriminating faculty did not correspond to the degree of their reliance on the past.

The aim of the inquirer should be to find from competent witnesses—from contemporaneous or succeeding writers of trustworthy character—the authors and ages of the biblical books. When evidence of this kind is not available, as often happens, the only resource is the internal. The external evidence in favour of the canon is all but exhausted, and nothing of importance can be added to it now. Its strength has been brought out; its weakness has not been equally exhibited. The problem resolves itself into an examination of internal characteristics, which may be strong enough to modify or counterbalance the external. The latter have had an artificial preponderance in the past; they must be regulated by the internal. The main conclusion should be drawn

from the contents of the books themselves. And the example of Jews and Christians, to whom we owe the Bible canon, shows that *classification* is necessary. Doubtless the authors from whom the separate books proceeded, if discoverable, should be regarded; the inspiration of an Isaiah is higher than that of Malachi, and an apostle is more authoritative than an evangelist; but the authors are often unknown. Besides, the processes of redaction through which many of the writings passed obscures an exact knowledge of authorship. In these circumstances the books themselves must determine the position they should occupy in the estimation of those who are looking at revelations of the past to help their spiritual life.

The normative element—that which constitutes a universal standard of faith and practice—will adjust the classes. Such books as embody the indestructible essence of religion with

the fewest accidents of time, place and nature—which present conditions soonest disengaged from the imperishable life of religion itself, deserve the first rank. Whatever Scriptures express ideas consonant with the nature of God as a holy, loving, just and good Being—as a benevolent Father not willing the destruction of any of his children; the Scriptures presenting ideas of Him consistent with pure reason and man's highest instincts, besides such as set forth our sense of dependence on the infinite; the books, in short, that contain a revelation from God with least admixture of the human conditions under which it is transmitted, these belong to the highest class. If they lead the reader away from opinion to practice, from dogma to life, from non-doing to obedience to the law of moral duty, from the notion that every thing in salvation has been done for him to the keeping of the commandments, from particularist conceptions about the divine mercy to the widest

belief of its overshadowing presence—such books of Scripture are in that same proportion to be ranked among the best. In regard to the Old Testament, conformity to Christ's teaching will determine rank; or which is tantamount, conformity to that pure reason which is God's natural revelation in man; the criterion assigning various ranks to such Scriptures as appeared among a Semite race at a certain stage of its development. In the New Testament, the words and precepts of Jesus have a character of their own, though it is very difficult to elicit them from the gospels. The supposition that the apostles' productions possess a higher authority than those of their disciples, is natural. But the immediate followers of Christ did not all stand on one platform. Differing from one another even in important principles, it is possible, if not certain, that some of their disciples' composition may be of higher value. The spirit of God may have wrought within the

apostles generally with greater power and clearness than in other teachers; but its operation is conditioned not merely by outward factors but by individual idiosyncracy; so that one who had not seen the Lord and was therefore not an apostle proper, may have had less apprehension of his mind than a later teacher. Paul stood above the primitive apostles in the extent to which he fathomed the pregnant sayings of Jesus and developed their latent germs. Thus the normative element—that which determines the varying degrees of authority belonging to the New Testament—does not lie in apostolic authorship but internal worth; in the clearness and power with which the divine Spirit enabled men to grasp the truth.

The multitudinous collection of books contained in the Bible is not pervaded by unity of purpose or plan, so as to make a good classification easy. Least of all is it dominated by such substantial unity as has been connected with one

man; for the conception of a Messiah was never the national belief of Judaism but a notion projected by prophets into the future to comfort the people in times of disaster, the forecasting of aspirations doomed to disappointment. From the collection presenting various degrees of intellectual and moral development, it is difficult to see a sufficient reason for some being canonised, to the exclusion of better works which were relegated to the class of the *apocryphal.*

Mr Jones's[1] statement that the primitive Christians are proper judges to determine what book is canonical, requires great modification, being too vague to be serviceable; for "primitive Christians" is a phrase that needs to be defined. How far do they extend? How much of the first and second centuries do they cover? Were not the primitive Christians

[1] See Jones's new and full method of settling the canonical authority of the New Testament, Vol. I., Part i., chap. 5, page 52, ed. 1726.

divided in their beliefs? Did the Jewish and the Pauline ones unite in accepting the same writings? Not for a considerable time, until the means of ascertaining the real authors of the books, and the ability to do so were lacking.

As to the Old Testament, the Palestinian Jews determined the canonical books by gradually contracting the list and stopping it at last at a time when their calamities throwing them back on the past for springs of hope, had stiffened them within a narrow traditionalism; but their brethren in Egypt, touched by Alexandrian culture and Greek philosophy, received later productions into their canon, some of which at least are of equal value with Palestinian ones. In any case, the degree of authority attaching to the Biblical books grew from less to greater, till it culminated in a divine character, a sacredness rising even to infallibility. A new arrangement is necessary now;

but where is the Church or ecclesiastical body bold enough to undertake it? And if it were attempted or carried out by non-ecclesiastical parties, would the churches approve or adopt the proceeding? Yet we venture to say, that if some books be separated from the collection and others put in their place—if the classification of some be altered, and their authority raised or lowered—good will be done; the Bible will have a fairer degree of normal power in doctrine and morals, and continue a medium of promoting spiritual life. Faith in Christ precedes faith in books. Unless criticism be needlessly negative it cannot remove this time-honoured legacy from the position it is entitled to, else the spiritual consciousness of humanity will rebel. While the subject is treated reverently, the love of truth must be permanent, overriding dogmatic prejudices. Then shall the canon come forth in a different form from that which it has had for cen-

turies—a form on which faith may rest without misgivings.

The canon was a work of divine providence because history, in a religious view, necessarily implies the fact. The canon was a work of divine inspiration, because the agency of the Holy Spirit has always been with the people of God, as a principle influencing their conduct. It was not a *special* or *peculiar* act of divine inspiration, but a gradual process, shaped by influences more or less active in the spiritual economy.

The canonical authority of Scripture does not depend on any church or council. The early church may be cited as *a witness* for it; that is all. Canonical authority lies in Scripture itself; it is inherent in the books so far as they contain a revelation or declaration of the divine will. Hence there is truth in the statement of old theologians that the authority of Scripture is from God alone. The *canonicity*

of the books is a distinct question from that of their *authenticity*. The latter is a thing of historic criticism; the former of doctrinal belief. Their ecclesiastical authority rests on outward attestation; their normal, on faith and feeling.

THE END.

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